



BLUE MISSION BANOS

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

Deliverable 2.5

Foresight report for a governance structure to ensure achievement of the Mission in the BANOS area

Grant Agreement number	101093845
Project title	BlueMissionBANOS – Supporting the Mission Ocean Lighthouse in the Baltic and North Sea Basin
Deliverable title	Foresight report for a governance structure to ensure achievement of the Mission in BANOS area
Deliverable number	2.5
Deliverable version	1
Contractual date of delivery	31.07.2025
Actual date of delivery	30.07.2025
Document status	Final
Document version	Version 1
Online access	Yes
Diffusion	Public
Nature of deliverable	Public
Work Package	Nr. 2
Partner responsible	SINTEF Ocean
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Keywords	BlueMissionBANOS, Mission Ocean, governance, stakeholders, workshops, scenarios



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HISTORY OF CHANGES		
Version	Publication date	Changes
1.0	28.02.2025	Draft version
2.0	22.05.2025	Second draft with all updates from Mission Arena workshops
3.0	30.07.2025	Final version with results and conclusion summaries



BLUEMISSIONBANOS PROJECT

BlueMissionBANOS (BMB), as a Coordination and Support Action (CSA) for the Baltic and North Sea (BANOS) Mission Ocean Lighthouse, 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 work reducing governance fragmentation, facilitating evidence-based decision-making and foster 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.

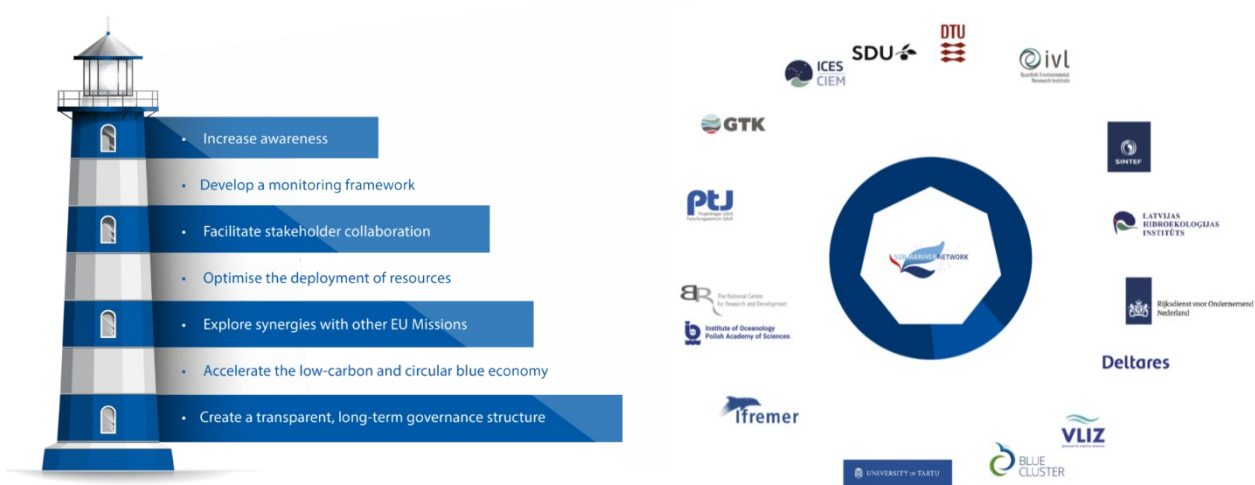


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ACRONYMS

BANOS	Baltic and North Sea
BBNJ	Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction
BMB	BlueMissionBANOS - Supporting the Mission Ocean Lighthouse in the Baltic and North Sea Basin
CNCBE	Carbon-neutral circular blue economy
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
DG	Directorate General
EC	European Commission
EMB	Sustainable Development Goals
EMFAF	European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GRG	Governance Reference Group
HELCOM	Helsinki Commission
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ICES	International Council for the Exploration of the Seas
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
NFP	National Focal Points
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OSPAR	Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
R&D	Research and design
RAC	Regional Advisory Council
RD&D	Research, development, and demonstration



RQ	Research Question
S3	Smart Specialisation Strategies
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIKT	Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WP	Work Package
WS	Workshop
WS1	The first governance workshop
WS2	The second governance workshop
WS3	The third governance workshop



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Deliverable 2.5: “Foresight report for a governance structure to ensure achievement of the Mission in BANOS area” presents the outcomes of a foresight exercise carried out under the Governance work package (WP) of the BMB project. The foresight exercise was conducted to anticipate governance needs, identify future challenges, and co-develop actionable policy pathways to help support the long-term implementation of the Mission Ocean objectives in the BANOS region. As such, it plays a critical role in ensuring the Mission is strategically aligned and driven by stakeholder input.

In the BMB project, foresight is defined as a method for developing future scenarios that provide decision makers with a basis for their actions. The goal was to develop relevant scenarios for the future at the local, national, and supranational levels. Workshops (WSs) used a participatory approach to explore perspectives and collaboration among and between stakeholders. In addition to the WS, other methods were employed to check progress, such as a survey developed with the BMB project team to ensure the work in the governance WP aligned with the rest of the project. Drawing on stakeholder mapping and the outputs of Deliverable 2.4: “Mapping of existing governance structures and gap analysis in the BANOS area”, this participatory foresight process involved a series of three iterative WSs with members of the project’s Governance Reference Group (GRG) and relevant stakeholders. The overall goal was to identify governance gaps, explore systemic challenges, and co-create viable context specific governance scenarios to achieve a carbon neutral and circular blue economy in the BANOS region.

The WSs took place during the four Mission Arenas from the BMB project. They were held respectively in Gothenburg (Sweden), Amsterdam (Netherlands), and Sopot (Poland). A fourth ‘internal check-in’ WS was held during the third Mission Arena in Riga (Latvia). The WSs followed a planned process of problem identification, solution generation, and pathways and scenario development. They brought together a diverse group of stakeholders across Europe from national, regional, and local levels, offering insights into how multi-level governance can better facilitate the implementation of the Mission Ocean objectives. The internal mid-process WSs were facilitated to validate the direction of the exercise and align the results with the Mission goals based on the other working packages in the BMB project.

This deliverable sets out a proposed framework for an optimal governance structure in the next stage of the Mission Ocean implementation when it comes to scaling up progress. It emphasises flexible, cross-sectoral coordination with the importance of including stakeholder engagement throughout all stages of the Mission implementation. Key action points included improved transparency, harmonised regulatory approaches, and the integration of a science-to-policy interface at the regional and local levels.

Finally, the report provides a structured pathway towards a more coherent and collaborative governance arrangement in the BANOS area by offering practical foundational guidance for further policy action, based on the needs of stakeholders.



1. INTRODUCTION

Across Europe’s coastal and marine systems, urgent challenges remain in restoring ecosystems, reducing pollution, and enabling the shift towards a sustainable, carbon-neutral circular blue economy (CNCBE). Although significant progress has been made through both national and EU-level strategies and initiatives, including the European Green Deal and Biodiversity Strategy, existing efforts remain to meet the objectives set by the *Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030*. The BMB project operates in the BANOS region, meaning Baltic and North Sea basins. Under the first stage of the Mission Ocean, the BANOS region therefore focuses on achieving a **carbon-neutral and circular blue economy**. This deliverable plays a role in supporting the EU Mission Ocean & Waters implementation by co-developing governance scenarios and enabling conditions that can accelerate the needed transformation in the region.

1.1. BACKGROUND

This deliverable, **D2.5 on Foresight report for a governance structure to ensure achievement of Mission in BANOS area**, includes pathways for potential governance in the BANOS region by building on the foundation of previous work, particularly [D2.4 Existing governance structures and gap analysis in the BANOS area](#). That report identified fragmented jurisdictional responsibilities, overlapping mandates, and stakeholder capacities as main barriers to integrating and achieving the Mission Ocean objectives (See Figure 1).

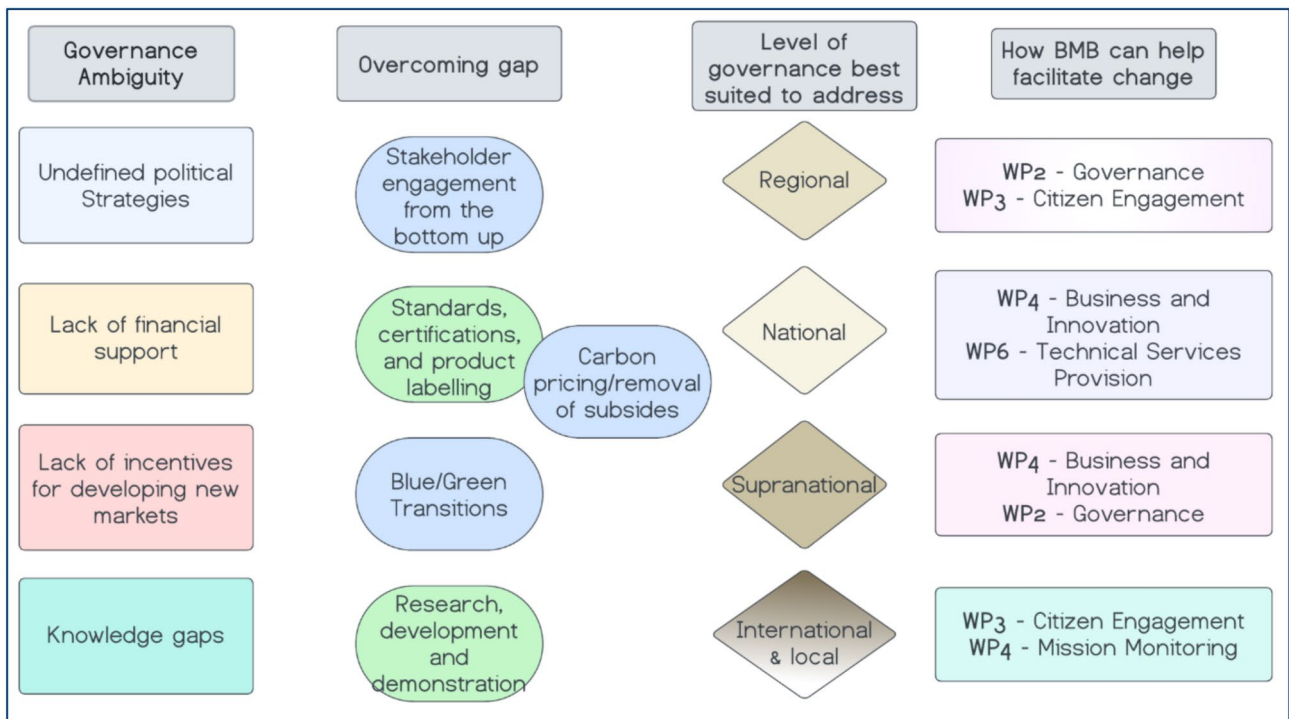


Figure 1 Overview of the governance gap analysis and avenues for improvement in the BANOS region. From D2.4 Existing governance structures and gap analysis in the BANOS area dedicated to Mission objectives.



1.1.1 GOVERNANCE GAPS

There is a significant number of governance gaps to be addressed to achieve a successful implementation of a CNCBE. The literature review in D2.4 revealed that the top hindrances towards this implementation are:

1. **Undefined political strategies** – there is a need for future-oriented strategies for technology implementation with long-term perspectives that extend internationally and across industrial sectors
2. **Lack of financial support** – projects for sustainable development often have higher risks as they are in new markets with unstable demand and longer pay-back periods, which can make it difficult to secure funding
3. **Lack of incentives for new developing markets** – the policy framework should focus on initial new infrastructure investments, key points in the future development of and implementation into the market, and centralised national coordination for large initial investments that have long-term benefits
4. **Knowledge gaps** – both with policymakers, preventing the development of emerging technologies, and ecological knowledge gaps to address the cross-section between the climate, biodiversity, and society

To overcome these gaps, we need:

1. **Public engagement** – initiatives often work better with engagement and support from local stakeholders, especially where values and rights are recognised and the distribution of trade-offs, benefits, and costs is seen as just
2. **Standards, certifications, and product labelling** – this is necessary to overcome the ambiguity of lacking the financial support to decarbonise the blue economy, and the market for low-carbon products and materials needs to grow
3. **Blue/green transitions** – we cannot cut all emissions, so solutions like carbon capture and storage and blue or green hydrogen can aid in reaching net-zero targets
4. **Research, development, and demonstration (RD&D)** – going from research to market is a bottleneck for technologies and innovations, so RD&D is needed to provide support and a scientific basis for policymakers, investors, and business owners

This topic is highly complex, wherein barriers are interconnected with each other and with the potential solutions, and where certain solutions may give rise to new barriers in the process. No one policy can decarbonise the industry sector, but rather a comprehensive package of policies is needed to create synergies between different strategies.



With these findings in mind, D2.5 moves from diagnosis to design in mapping pathways for governance innovation that can promote coherence and increase resilience in the BANOS region. Throughout the course of the BMB project, a highly relevant initiative from the European Commission (EC) came about regarding ocean resilience for the future. Relevant to the governance WSs, the Ocean Pact was included in the findings of this foresight report.

1.1.2. EUROPEAN OCEAN PACT

The need for proactive governance frameworks has only become more apparent throughout the lifetime of the BMB project. In 2025, the EC launched the initial call for evidence (See Figure 2) to provide input to the **European Ocean Pact**.

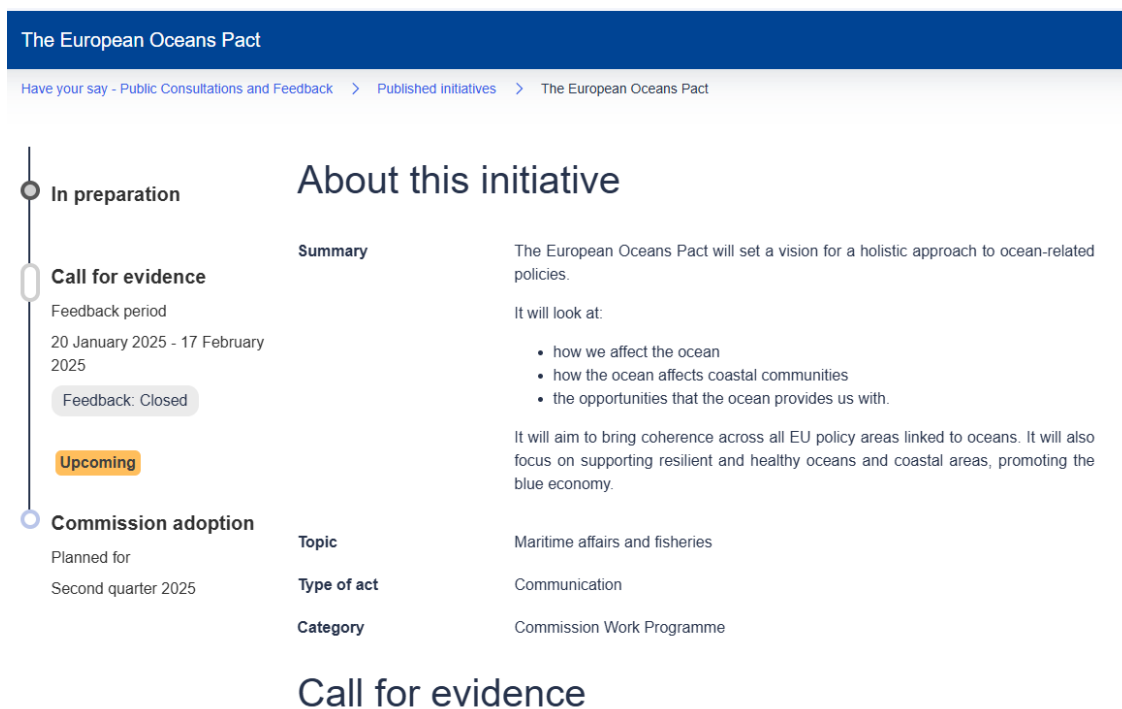


Figure 2 EC Website that provided information about the Ocean Pact call for evidence.

1.1.2 EUROPEAN OCEAN PACT

The European Ocean Pact, an initiative by the EC, seeks to enhance coherence across all EU policy domains related to ocean governance. This initiative aims to address the effects of human activities on marine ecosystems, assess the socio-economic and environmental impacts of oceanic changes on coastal communities, and identify opportunities for sustainable development within the EU’s maritime space. Although the Pact was not initially integrated into the proposal of BMB, its emergence has become of significant interest for stakeholders and researchers aligned with the Mission’s objectives, especially in the project’s governance WP. Given BMB’s ambition to strengthen multi-level ocean governance and foster a circular blue economy through national, regional, and transnational collaboration, its alignment with the goals of the European Ocean Pact is both timely and strategically



Respondents as percents of stakeholder types

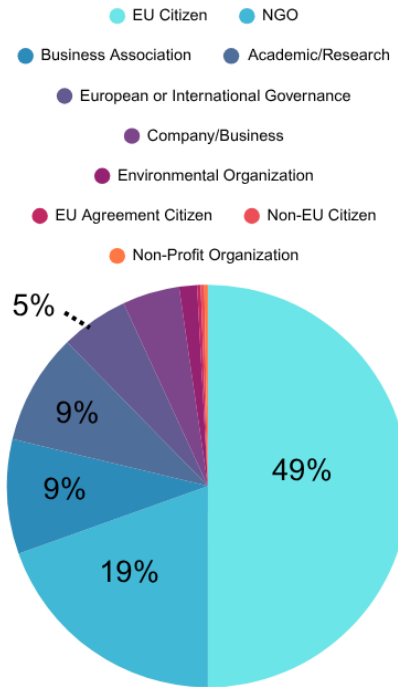


Figure 4 Pie graph of different stakeholder types from the Baltic Sea and North Sea regions and their representation in the European Ocean Pact call for evidence

The Ocean Pact provides important context for the foresight work undertaken in this deliverable. There was even the release of the initial text at the UN Ocean Decade Conference in Nice in June of 2025, where the EC formally introduced the Pact as one of its new initiatives. With targets ranging from ecosystem restoration and pollution reduction to acceleration of the blue economy, the Pact aims to unify EU ocean efforts under one umbrella. It reinforces the need for participatory, adaptive, and inclusive governance frameworks that are scalability and can grow in the complexity of Mission Ocean implementation. The official Ocean Pact webpage now hosts all background documents, stakeholder summaries, and implementation updates:

<https://oceans-and-waters.ec.europa.eu/eu-ocean-pact>

For the BMB project, the Pact offers both validation and opportunity. Its emergence during the foresight process confirmed many of the governance challenges raised in our workshops, especially around institutional silos, feedback mechanisms, and scale mismatches. Moving forward, the Ocean Pact will likely provide the umbrella framework under which Mission Ocean implementation can be embedded and scaled. As such, the Pact features throughout this deliverable not just as a policy context, but as a target for alignment.



1.2. TARGET AUDIENCE AND TERMINOLOGY

This deliverable is intended for EU and national policymakers, regional and local authorities, mission implementers, and researchers interested in governance design. It may also inform stakeholders involved in the future phases of Mission implementation and in Ocean Pact related activities.

Several key terms are used throughout the report:

- **Governance** – Refers to the set of rules, practices, institutions, and interactions through which decisions are made and implemented at different scales. In the Mission context, governance encompasses formal government actors as well as non-governmental, private sector, and civil society inputs
- **Foresight** – A strategic planning method used to anticipate and prepare for multiple possible futures. It does not aim to predict the future but instead helps stakeholders identify key uncertainties, preferred trajectories, and enabling conditions.
- **Workshop** – Refers to a structured, participatory event that brings together diverse stakeholders to co-develop insights, priorities, and explore governance options related to the Mission's objectives in the BANOS region. These WSs are designed to integrate scientific evidence with practitioner experience through interactive dialogue and scenario exploration.
- **Stakeholder** – Refers to any individual, group, or organisation with an interest in or influence on the governance of marine and coastal systems in the BANOS region. This includes representatives from public authorities, industry, civil society, academia, and intergovernmental or regional bodies contributing to or affected by Mission implementation.

1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE

The remainder of this report is organised as follows:

- **Chapter 2** outlines the methodology used, including WS design and facilitation as well as ethical considerations
- **Chapter 3** presents the results of the three core participatory WSs focusing on **1)** problem identification (Gothenburg, SE) **2)** Preliminary solutions and obstacles (Amsterdam, NL), and **3)** Pathways development (Sopot, PL). Finally, an internal check-in WS was held in Riga, Latvia.
- **Chapter 4** synthesises the foresight mapping into a series of governance scenarios found from the results of the final WS, including input from stakeholders on these scenarios' feasibility, scalability, and replicability.
- **Chapter 5** concludes the deliverable with insights for future Mission implementation and up-scaling, including links to the evolving Ocean Pact, while identifying opportunities for further research and action in the BANOS region and beyond.



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. WORKSHOP METHODS

Within the BMB project, governance WSs were conducted across four Mission Arenas in the BANOS region. These WSs aimed to engage stakeholders from policy, academia, industry, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to advance a sustainable blue economy collaboratively. An iterative and adaptive methodology was therefore employed, tailoring each WS's approach to its specific objectives and the evolving needs of the Mission Arena.

The first WS, which took place at the first Mission Arena, focused on problem identification, utilising participatory techniques to map out key challenges and areas requiring intervention. Building upon these insights, the subsequent WSs aimed to identify and develop potential solutions, encouraging stakeholders to co-create actionable strategies. A mid-term consortium check-in WS was held to assess progress, share experiences across arenas, and refine approaches based on collective feedback. The final WS was dedicated to developing best-case scenarios and pathways forward for governance at local, national, and EU/global levels.

A '**meta**' methodological framework underpinned the WS series, leveraging the diverse expertise of stakeholders to build foresight maps and scenario developments. This type of framework refers to a higher-level, overarching approach to selecting and applying methods based on the specific needs of a given context. Instead of prescribing a single fixed methodology, it allows for flexibility and adaptation by integrating different methods depending on the objectives, stakeholder composition, and stage of the process (1).

In the case of the BMB governance WSs, this iterative process involved:

1. **Problem Identification** – Mapping key challenges and needs with stakeholders.
2. **Solution Exploration** – Developing potential solutions collaboratively.
3. **Progress Check-In** – Evaluating and refining strategies with the consortium.
4. **Scenario Development** – Creating best-case governance pathways at different levels.

This meta-methodological approach ensured that the WSs remained responsive, drawing on expert insights and participatory tools (such as foresight mapping and scenario development) to co-create governance strategies tailored to the Mission Arenas in the BANOS regions.

This approach was co-developed with the consortium and research team, ensuring that each WS's methodology was optimally suited to its specific context and objectives. For instance, in the 3rd Mission Arena WS, the WS benefited from an existing stakeholder group established during previous engagements at the 1st Mission Arena, enabling a deeper exploration of governance challenges and opportunities.



By adopting this flexible and responsive approach, the WSs effectively addressed the unique dynamics of each Mission Arena, developing collaborative governance strategies to support the transition towards a sustainable blue economy in the BANOS region.

2.2.1 WORKSHOPS OVERVIEW

The following figures are taken from each of the three foresight WSs between 2023-2025.



Figure 5 Photo from the first governance WS in Gothenburg, Sweden.



Figure 6 Photo from the second governance WS in Amsterdam, Netherlands.



Figure 7 Photo from the third governance WS in Sopot, Poland.

Table 1 Overview of the governance WSs held as part of this deliverable

Mission Arena/ Location	Date	No. of Participants	Stakeholder groups represented	Method(s) used	Facilitators
1 Gothenburg, Sweden	15.11.2023	21	Policy, Academic	Conceptual mapping	SINTEF, PtJ
2 Riga, Latvia	24.04.2024	22	Policy, Academia	World Café via Deliberative Dialogue	SINTEF, PtJ
3 Amsterdam, Netherlands	27.11.2025	25	Policy, Academia, Industry NGO	Rose, Thorn, Bud & Storyboard	SINTEF, PtJ
4 Sopot, Poland	28.04.2025	37	Policy, Academia, Industry NGO	World Café, Scenario refinement	SINTEF, PtJ

2.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Following the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (SIKT) procedure on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), SINTEF Ocean has taken responsibility to create a data management plan for the WSs held in the BMB project. The plan was approved by SIKT on 06.02.2023. The processing of personal data was approved by SIKT to ensure that GDPR is fully complied with. The participants received written information about their rights and the proceedings of the WSs prior to the activity and signed an informed consent form before participating. The raw data was processed in confidence within the project and all input from participants presented as results were anonymised and cannot be linked to individual participants.



3. WORKSHOP RESULTS

3.1. OVERVIEW

The governance WSs at the Mission Arenas were central to our effort to encourage stakeholder integration and the co-creation of knowledge within the BMB project. Rooted in the EU Mission "Restore our Ocean and Waters," the Mission Arenas served as participatory platforms to bring together diverse actors, ranging from scientists and policymakers to industry representatives, civil society organisations, and local communities. Each Arena was designed to enable dialogue, identify shared priorities, and co-develop pathways for transformation across the BANOS region.

The WSs were carried out in two formats: internal and external. Internal WSs focused on consolidating expertise within the project consortium, ensuring alignment across partners and refining our methodological approach. External WSs, by contrast, were open stakeholder events aimed at capturing regional insights, validating emerging findings, and strengthening collaboration beyond the consortium. This two-tiered structure enabled both depth and breadth in our engagement strategy.

Mission Arenas are not merely one-off events, they represent a structured process of interaction, feedback, and refinement. Their significance lies in building trust and raising mutual learning, which is essential for addressing the complex challenges facing marine and coastal systems. Visuals provided by the consortium illustrate the Arena model and its role in guiding our stakeholder-driven approach to innovation and governance. The section below includes the results from all four WSs followed by an overall assessment of the WSs combined and the foresight mapping report.



Figure 8 Concept of Mission Arenas by BlueMissionBANOS



3.2. WORKSHOP 1 – (GOTHENBURG, SE) ‘PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION’

3.2.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The first workshop (WS1) was held in **Gothenburg, Sweden** on **Wednesday 15th November 2023**. It lasted two hours and was titled “*Towards an effective Mission Ocean Governance – What is needed to successfully implement the Mission?*”. The ambition of WS1 was to **understand the perspectives of key governance stakeholders regarding how the Mission Ocean could be implemented successfully**. This included identifying which doubts and challenges the stakeholders perceived as necessary to overcome for the Mission’s success, and which existing governance structures could be built on to address the identified challenges.

3.2.2 OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question (RQ) for WS1 was “*What is needed to successfully implement the Mission Ocean in the BANOS region?*”. To explore this question, a conceptual mapping approach was used, where the discussions were guided by predetermined drivers while allowing for flexibility in discussions, enabling participants to include additional themes or rearrange the suggested drivers relevant to the Mission’s goals. The suggested drivers consisted of six themes, each with a set of open-ended questions related to **successes and gaps**; regulations, financial mechanisms, environmental considerations, markets, and research in the BANOS region that could contribute towards a carbon-neutral blue economy and fulfilment of the Mission Ocean objectives. The WS followed a semi-structured format where dialogue was largely participant led, fostering in-depth discussions on topics they perceived as most relevant to the RQ.

3.2.3 STAKEHOLDERS PRESENT

A total of 21 participants attended the WS (excluding facilitators), all of whom represented “governance stakeholders” from the BANOS region (Figure & Figure). These individuals were affiliated with organisations and institutions engaged in national governance, EU-level governance, research, and funding. The inclusion of a diverse set of governance stakeholders was considered essential, as they were expected to contribute broad and complementary expertise, drawing on past governance successes while also providing insights into the scope for future action in relation to the Mission’s implementation.



Sectors Represented at Workshop 1, Gothenburg

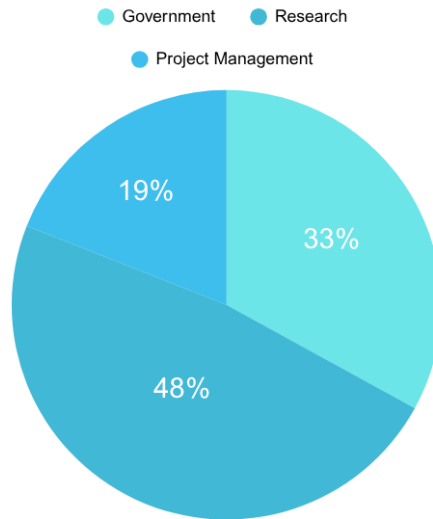


Figure 9 - Percent representation of sector representatives attending WS1 in Gothenburg.

Countries represented at Workshop 1, Gothenburg

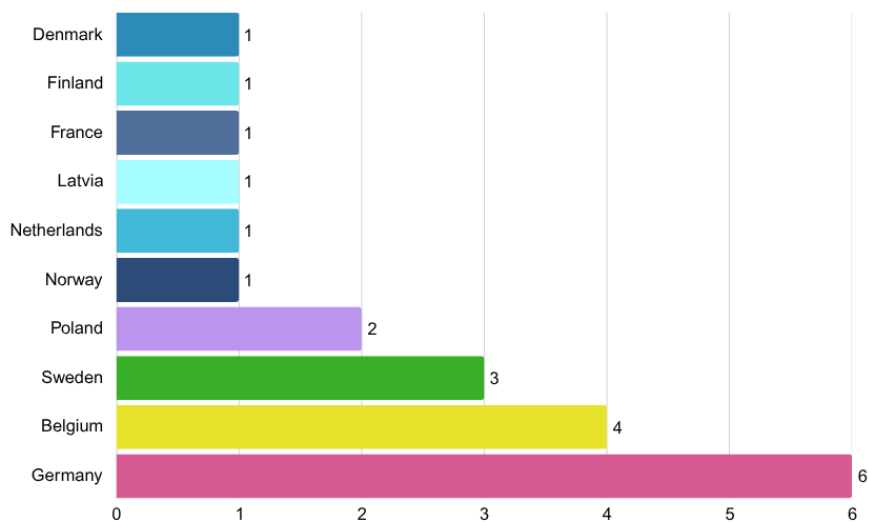


Figure 10 - Number of individuals per country or region attending WS1 in Gothenburg.



3.2.4. RESULTS

WS1 with governance stakeholders discussed several interrelated themes that were perceived as important to successfully implement the Mission Ocean in the BANOS region (Figure 11). This included both challenges in need of being addressed as well as suggested solutions or options to facilitate the Mission Ocean implementation. The discussions spanned across local, national, and regional/EU-level contexts, often extending beyond the BANOS region. This underlines the connectivity and complexity of marine governance in Europe, in particular relating to the practical implementation of the Mission Ocean. The key themes discussed by the participants revolved around the three objectives of the Mission Ocean. It is important to note that at the time of this WS the Mission had only just started, so it was a chance to set the scene and understand varying backgrounds and understandings of the Mission Ocean objectives and expectations.

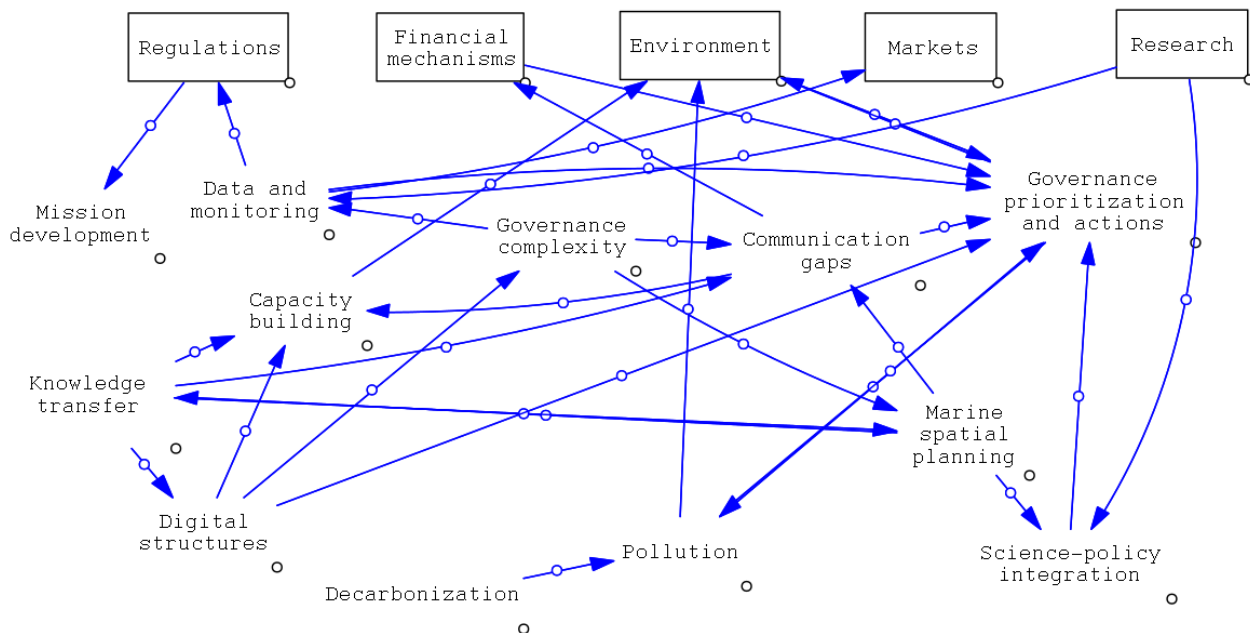


Figure 11 - Simplified conceptual map from the First Mission Arena Governance WS.

The Governance WS demonstrated an intricate landscape of interconnected challenges, opportunities, and systemic blind spots positioned to shape the implementation of the EU Mission Ocean. To structure the input from stakeholders, the session was centred around a conceptual mapping method, as shown in Figure 11. This captured the interdependencies across governance, regulation, finance, environmental goals, and research needed to reach an effective CNCBE in the BANOS region. The map goes beyond a diagnostic for issues, though, it is a collective map of the potential and ongoing tensions encountered by those attempting to align and deliver on the Mission Ocean objectives in real time. The arrows release flows of influence as well as areas of fragmentation. For example, governance complexity was repeatedly mentioned as both an output of and contributor to communication gaps and missed opportunities for prioritisation. The conceptual map also points to areas where more coherent coordination could strengthen implementation of the Mission in capacity building, knowledge transfer, and upscaling of digital structures.



A. Barriers and opportunities

While the stakeholders at the first WS generally endorsed the ambitions of the Mission in the BANOS region, responses revealed diverging perceptions regarding its current trajectory and implementation ability. Some stakeholders highlighted national or regional initiatives that had effectively internalised language and priorities, while others working at the local and subnational levels thought the Mission to be too abstract and dependent on fuzzy narratives rather than clear and concise paths forward. The WS was recorded for accuracy in this reporting, however, to avoid a long and redundant reporting the results are visualised in the following

Table 2 Results summarised from the first governance WS

Dimension	Positive observations	Constraints and barriers
Communication	Charter signatories and national convenings have raised visibility.	Local actors remain unsure what the Mission means for them; concepts perceived as too high-level or vague; need for practical language and clear points of entry.
Governance and policy integration	Existing regional structures (HELCOM, OSPAR, RACs) seen as assets.	Overlapping mandates, lack of coordination across directorate generals (DG)s, unclear enforcement or prioritisation mechanisms at EU or national level.
Funding and financial leverage	Pilot projects and blue finance tools are gaining traction in some areas.	Local priorities rarely align with funding calls; overly bureaucratic application processes; short funding cycles limit long-term planning.
Knowledge exchange	“Associated regions” concept seen as a way to foster cross-border learning.	Little infrastructure for transferring successful models; science–policy interfaces underdeveloped; fragmentation hinders scalability.
Decarbonisation and technical transformation	Strong consensus on the importance of clean energy transitions, especially in maritime sectors.	Demonstration projects underfunded; lack of coordination between technological research and design (R&D) and implementation needs; decarbonisation often disconnected from biodiversity aims.
Legal and strategic framing	Clear headline targets (e.g. pollution reduction, nature restoration) widely supported.	No binding mechanism for policy prioritisation; strategic documents not translated into operational legal mandates or timelines.



Mission Implementation Analysis

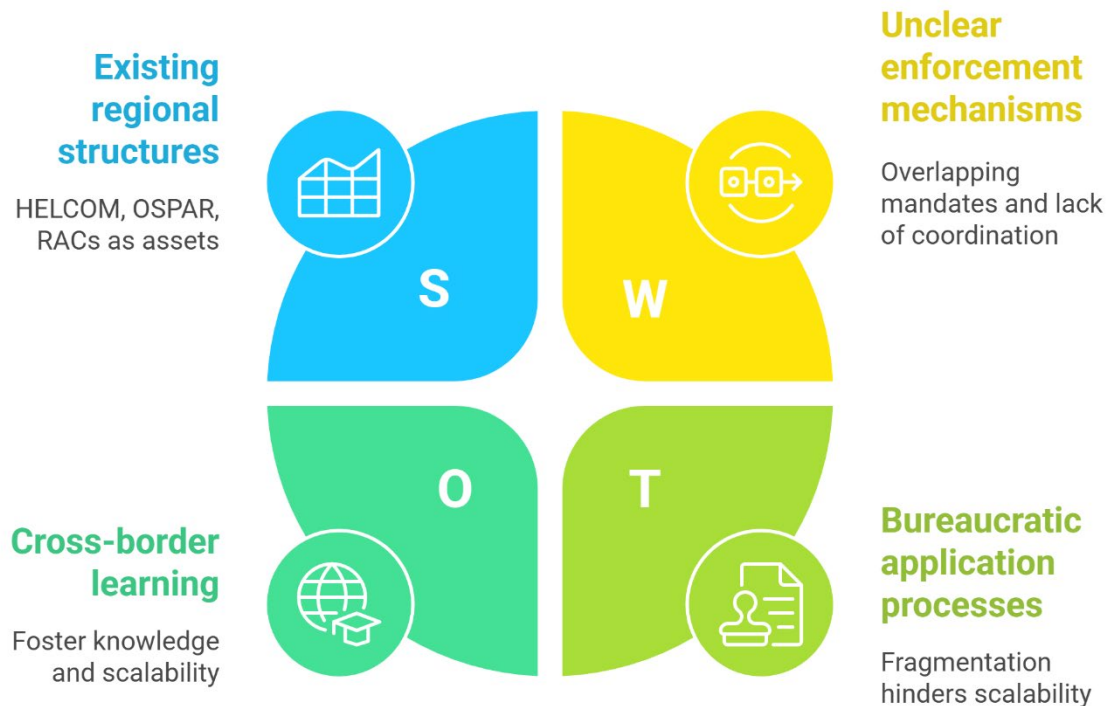


Figure 12 SWOT analysis outlined from the first governance WS results

B. Three recurring insights from the WS

Rather than focusing on surface-level barriers, the WS brought about several systematic themes from the discussions on the first stage of the Mission Ocean implementation. The three themes are summarised below:

- 1) First, the stakeholders saw the Mission as an ongoing ‘experiment’ in adaptive governance, not fixed but evolving. This flexibility was seen as positive and allowed for learning and feedback mechanisms. However, there was also ambiguity in that it should not become an excuse for inaction.
- 2) Second, a lack of structural and temporal coherence was widely noted. Policy ambition at the EU level does not automatically replicate and disseminate to national and subnational action. DG-level coordination remained dispersed and could benefit from more cross-over and similar feedback mechanisms.
- 3) Third, the shift away from awareness to action has stalled in the past and cannot continue. A limited number of stakeholders felt that we have the proper mandate and tools to operationalise the Mission Objectives. Political choices continue to lag behind the transformative language. As one participant put it: *“Even in my own organisation, people ask - what is this Mission really, and what are we supposed to do with it?”*

C. Takeaways and recommendations from WS1

WS1 demonstrated the willingness to take the Mission Ocean seriously and find the best strategies for implementation. The stakeholders at WS1 called for an explicit recognition to enhance systemic and strategic alignment, and not only rely on science and communication and outreach efforts from the past.

There is a clear need to make regional and national-level alignment with Mission objectives more explicit and traceable. Beyond individual funding calls or policy statements, what is missing is a commitment to strategic coherence and accountability across governance levels. Civil society engagement and blue innovation are growing organically, but their integration into the Mission remains patchy. As one participant summarised: *"The initiatives are there, but they're scattered, and we're still not sure how they fit together."*

The following priority actions (Figure 13) were flagged for attention before the next phase of the Mission Ocean implementation:

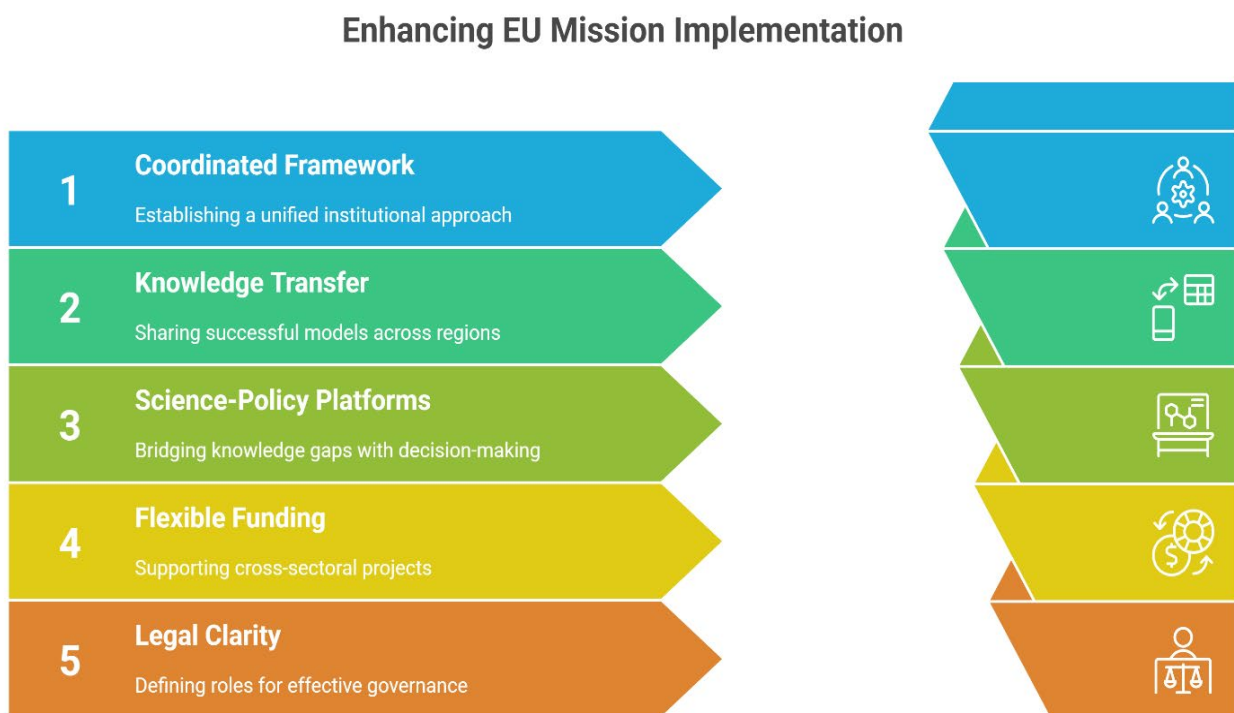


Figure 13 Results from the first governance WS on how to enhance the Mission Ocean implementation

Overall, the WS pointed to a shared commitment to Mission goals, but also to a structural lag in how those goals are being realised. The next phase will require less focus on promotion, and more on institutional embedding, moving from visibility to durability. The risk is not rejection, but drift. Addressing that means designing with friction in mind.

3.3. WORKSHOP 2 – ‘START TO FIND SOLUTIONS’

3.3.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The second workshop (WS2), entitled “*Filling the Gaps: Discussing Pathways for effective Mission Ocean Governance*”, took place at the 3rd BMB Arena on **November 26th, 2024, in Amsterdam, Netherlands**. The goal of WS2 was to address key regulatory and governance gaps to reach a carbon-neutral blue economy in the BANOS region. These discussions were built upon ideas and contributions from WS1.

3.3.2 OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In WS2, there were three specific RQs to be explored. The first, “What are the specific governance gaps identified from WS1 and how can we overcome them to achieve the BMB goals?” This reflected back to the findings from WS1 to ensure the transition of knowledge occurred to this next WS. The second RQ connected this past knowledge with current initiatives, investigating “Which existing governance structures and frameworks could be used to bridge these gaps?”. The last RQ focused on how to make these governance models work with people, business, institutions, and other organisations by following the question, “What roles should different stakeholders play in the governance model to ensure its success?” These three RQs aimed to tie together the findings from WS1 with the knowledge of individuals in WS2 to generate ideas for practical solutions to governance gaps.

Research Question	Focus
RQ 1	What specific governance gaps were identified in WS1, and how can we address them to achieve the BMB goals?
RQ 2	Which existing governance structures or frameworks could help bridge these gaps?
RQ 3	What roles should stakeholders (e.g., public institutions, businesses, research actors) play in ensuring governance models succeed?

3.3.3 STAKEHOLDERS

Including facilitators, the WS included 36 attendees from across a broad range of backgrounds. The most common of these included national government officials, research institutes, universities, and project management firms. Together, these attendees represented **14 different EU and EU agreement countries**.



Sectors Represented at Workshop 2, Amsterdam

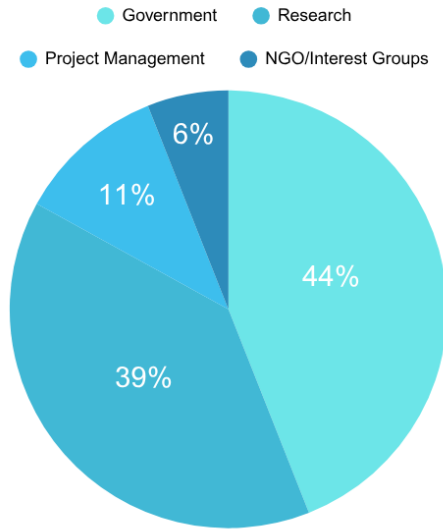


Figure 14 Pie graph representing the percent of each sector type attending WS2 in Amsterdam

Countries represented at Workshop 2, Amsterdam

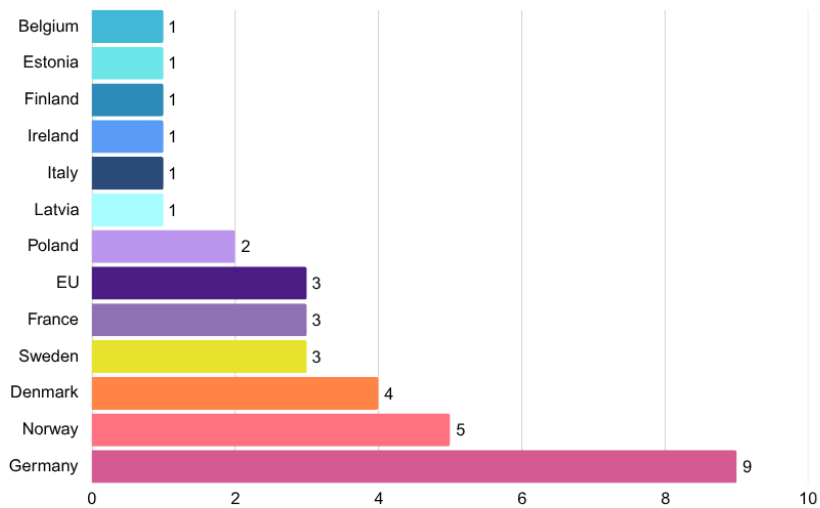


Figure 15 Bar graph representing the number of individuals from each country or region attending WS2 in Amsterdam



3.3.4. RESULTS

Results of WS2 appeared in two distinct sections: the first half encompassing discussions of opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses in each of the different geographical sea governance areas and the second with the creation of a storyboard to visualise stakeholders and governance structures working in tandem.

A. Rose, thorn, bud results

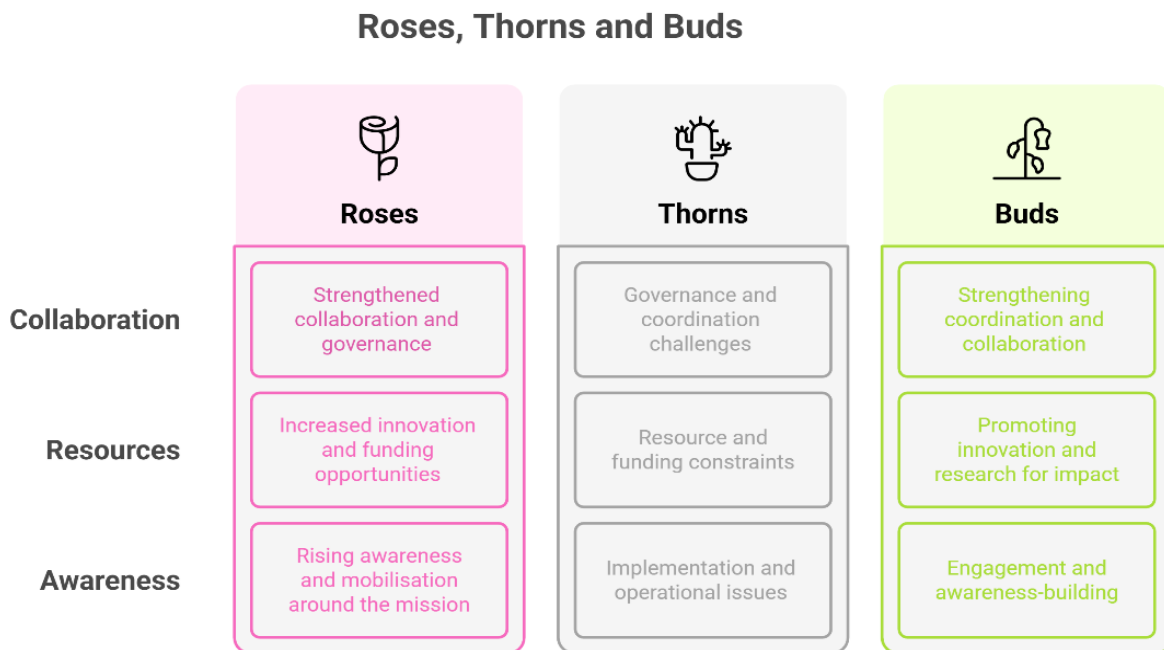


Figure 16 Overview from the Rose, Thorn, Bud WS results

Insights from the Rose–Thorn–Bud Exercise

The Rose–Thorn–Bud exercise provided a structured snapshot of stakeholder perceptions around the current state and future potential of EU Mission Ocean governance in the BANOS region. This method helped surface *strengths (roses)* to build on, *challenges (thorns)* to address, and emerging *opportunities (buds)* to explore further in implementation strategies.

Key takeaways include:

- **Momentum exists:** Stakeholders acknowledged growing collaboration, awareness, and innovation efforts linked to Mission Ocean, suggesting that the foundational support for transition is in place.
- **Systemic barriers remain:** Challenges around fragmented governance, operational complexity, and resource limitations indicate critical areas needing targeted solutions.
- **Opportunities for strategic action:** Emerging ideas focused on enhancing coordination, research-driven impact, and engagement point to actionable entry points for governance innovation.



These insights provide an essential bridge toward the final WS, where participants co-developed more concrete governance scenarios, implementation pathways, and tailored policy mechanisms. They also inform the foresight mapping report, helping to distinguish between short-term fixes, medium-term coordination needs, and long-term structural reforms required for Mission Ocean's success at the EU level.

B. Storyboarding Takeaways

Participants collaborated to create visual "storyboards" that identified challenges and mapped possible governance solutions. Key insights included:

- **Governance Fragmentation:** Issues across European, regional sea basin, and national levels.
- **Funding Misalignment:** The need for coherence in financial mechanisms across governance levels.
- **Scaling the Mission:** A need for stronger leadership and expanded responsibilities is currently perceived too narrowly as a research initiative.
- **Ocean Pact Engagement:** Participants emphasised the need to shape the next EC's Ocean Pact, making it more actionable.
- **Ministry-Centric Approach:** Focus should shift toward engaging specific ministries, each with unique priorities, "*tailored solutions over one-size-fits-all*".
- **Reframing:** Emphasise what the Mission can do for ministries and agencies, not what ministries must do for the Mission.

B. Prioritised Ideas (from Storyboarding)

Rank	Idea	Participant Interest
1	Influencing the Ocean Pact content and continuing the lighthouse structure into the new EC mandate	Most Enthusiasm
2	Identifying needs to support lighthouse demonstrators within multi-level governance contexts	Moderate Interest
3	Creating a Mission Task Force or " Mission Bus " inspired by the Danish model	Limited but targeted interest



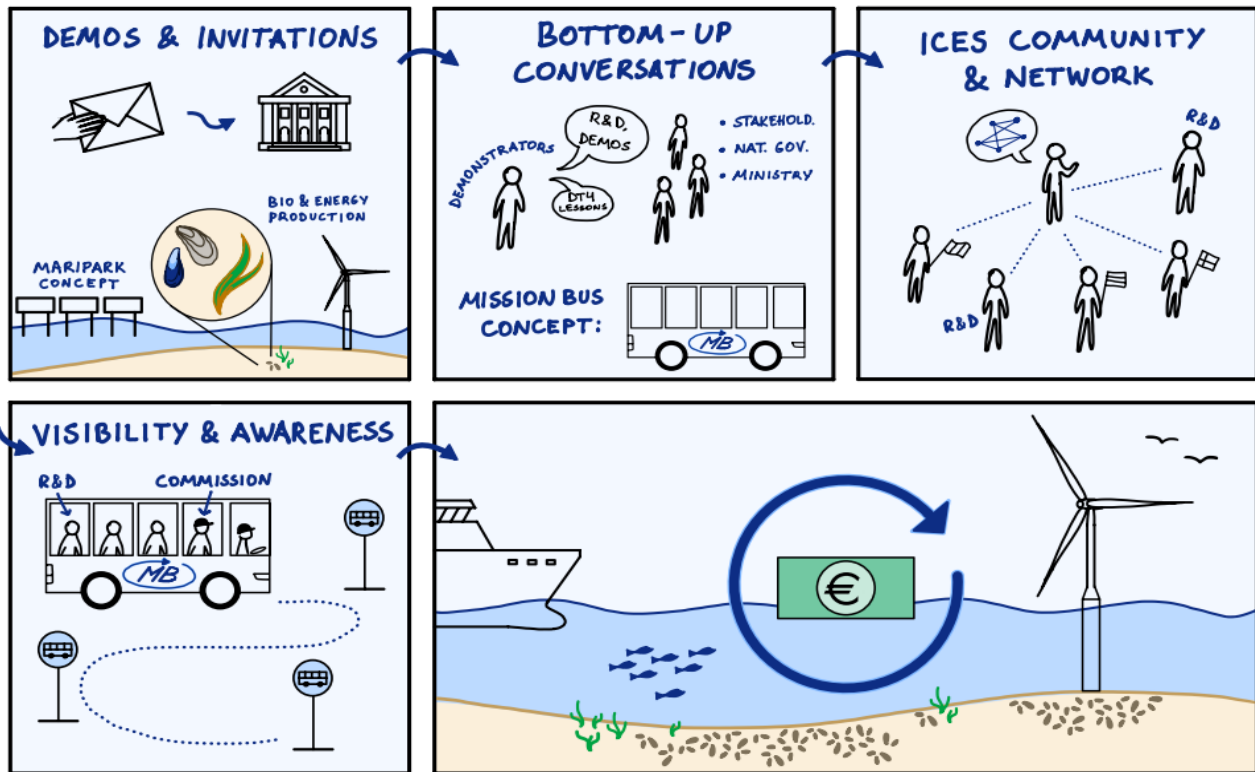


Figure 17 Final storyboard from WS2

The storyboard begins in the first frame by showing the importance of involving national governments in task forces that coordinate across ocean-related policies spanning biodiversity, energy, and the blue economy. It then moves to demonstrator projects, which share lessons learned with ministries and stakeholders, knowledge that is consolidated into a "Mission Bus" containing solutions, governance structures, and tools for broader dissemination. The third frame highlights the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) network as a vehicle for aligning scientific advice and policy across the EU and its member states. In the next frame, the Mission Bus is seen travelling to local communities to raise awareness and scale up demonstrations. The final frame envisions the realisation of a sustainable blue economy, one that safeguards marine biodiversity, expands wind energy production, and advances greener shipping practices.

3.3.5 CLOSING REFLECTIONS

The WS represents an important step towards developing practical pathways for implementing the mission goals. Thanks to the participation of most stakeholders in the governance workshop held as part of the 1st Mission Arena in Gothenburg in November 2023 and in the preparatory meeting for this WS, the methodology was well understood, and the discussions were results-oriented. The results achieved form the basis for the further development of governance scenarios. Together with two other workshops on offshore wind and multi-use governance, this workshop contributed to the following action points at the 3rd Mission Arena (Roadmap 2030: Steps for effective deployment of the Mission Ocean & Waters, Arena 3 Region: Northern France, Belgium, Netherlands, Western Germany & Western Denmark, Download: [Roadmap - BMB Arena 3](#))



3.4 WORKSHOP 3 ‘IDENTIFYING PRACTICAL PATHWAYS FORWARD’

3.4.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The third workshop (WS3), entitled “*Filling the Gaps: Discussing Pathways for effective Mission Ocean Governance*”, took place at the 4th BMB Arena on **April 28th, 2025, in Sopot, Poland**. The goal of WS3 was to identify if the pathways built from WS1 & WS2 and the 3 levels of governance would be feasible, scalable, and resilient to help implement the Mission objectives in the second phase.

3.4.2 OVERVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In WS3, the objective was to critically assess whether the governance pathways envisioned at the local, national, and supranational levels could effectively support the second phase of the Mission Ocean. This includes upscaling and deployment of governance solutions for reaching a sustainable, carbon-neutral blue economy. The WS built on the scenario ‘visions’ developed from the previous WSs and validated during the world café. The WS then asked participants to examine the feasibility, scalability, and resilience of proposed governance pathways to deliver the Mission objectives under real-world constraints.

Participants were asked to refine and assess three governance scenarios:

- **Local-Level Collaborative Ocean Governance**, where place-based leadership from coastal communities and municipalities fosters integrated and adaptive management of marine resources;
- **National-Level Ocean Governance for Policy Integration**, where coherent legal frameworks and institutional mandates align sectoral priorities (e.g., energy, fisheries, biodiversity);
- **Supranational/Global-Level Integrated Ocean Governance**, where the EU, regional sea conventions, and global instruments (such as the UN Ocean Decade and the BBNJ Agreement) converge to support transboundary governance and knowledge sharing.

To evaluate these scenarios, WS3 was guided by three interlinked RQs designed to surface insights across governance scales and stakeholder types:

Research Question	Focus
RQ 1	Are the governance pathways identified at local, national, and supranational levels feasible in terms of institutional capacity, legal mandates, and political will?
RQ 2	What features make these pathways scalable and adaptable across BANOS contexts, and what barriers might constrain their wider deployment?
RQ 3	How can governance pathways be designed to remain resilient under dynamic environmental, economic, and social conditions, and which actors are essential to sustaining them through upscaling?



3.4.3 PARTICIPANTS

Including facilitators, WS3 included 36 attendees from across a broad range of backgrounds. A majority of participants came from either a research or government affiliated background, comprising 71% of the participants. Additional sectors represented included industry and business, NGOs, and organisations promoting supranational collaboration amongst researchers, governments, and institutions. Together, these attendees represented **11 different EU and EU agreement countries**.

Sectors Represented at Workshop 3, Sopot

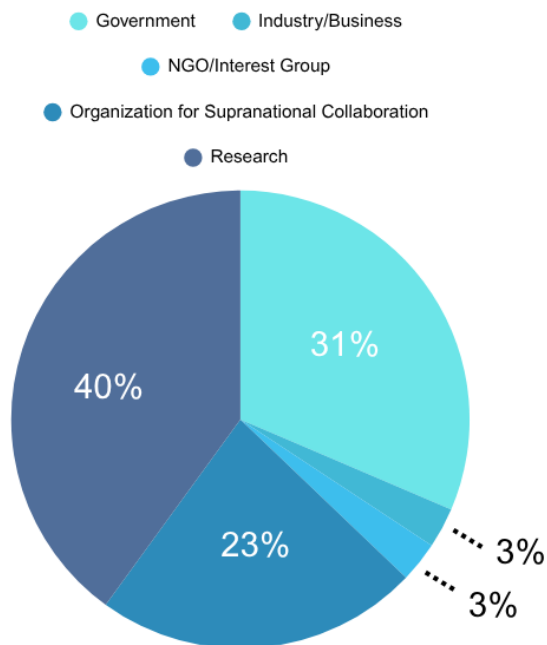


Figure 18 Pie graph representing the percent of each sector type attending WS3 in Sopot

Countries represented at Workshop 3, Sopot

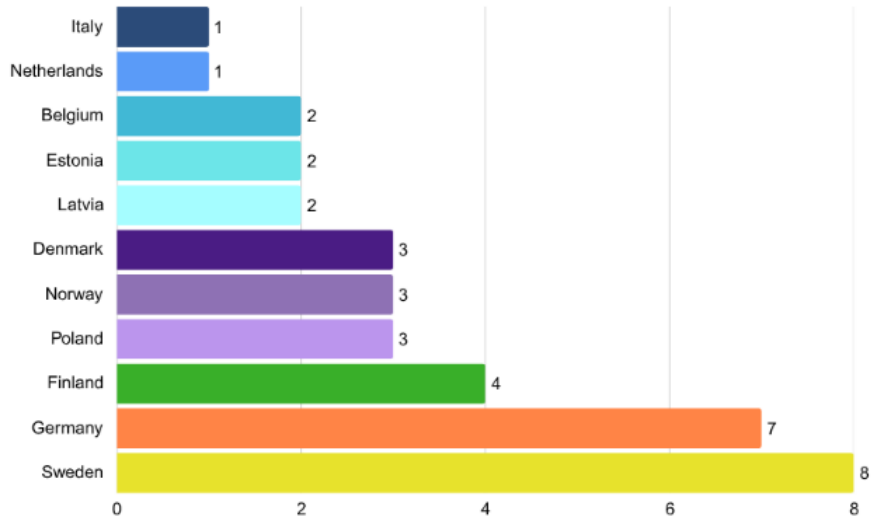


Figure 19 Bar graph representing the number of individuals from each country or region attending WS3 3 in Sopot

3.4.4. RESULTS

The final governance WS used a mix of participatory methods, including the World Café approach and scenario refinement exercises to define key governance pathways across the multiple levels of governance. This WS aimed to identify actionable strategies to help enhance the governance structures to support the Mission Ocean implementation in the BANOS region.



Table 3 Review of the World Cafe results from WS3

Governance Level	Key Recommended Actions
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen dialogue between local and higher governance levels, ensuring that the voices of communities, such as fishers, are heard and integrated. Boost local capacity building through education and training to increase implementation feasibility. Recognise the blurred boundaries of local/global challenges—many global issues have direct local consequences. Integrate local knowledge into research and decision-making, while also improving access to current scientific results. Simplify overly ambitious scenarios by focusing on tangible support mechanisms—knowledge access, capacity development, and funding
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the integration of land-based and emerging sectors within blue economy strategies. Facilitate cross-ministerial cooperation to reduce policy fragmentation and foster agile governance. Develop a new set of success indicators and evaluation methodologies that reflect social, ecological, and economic goals. Promote finance mechanisms for innovation and transition, supported by a shift in governance culture. Involve citizens and ministries in education and co-design of policies from planning to evaluation. Establish advisory groups to bridge science and policy. Avoid excessive delays by setting realistic short-term targets and conducting regular policy reviews.
Supranational/Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accelerate implementation at the global level, ensuring timely action aligned with sustainability goals. Improve policy coherence and multi-level governance communication. Introduce a supraregional governance level, such as the Nordic region, to bridge the gap between national and global efforts. Scale up successful models like Erasmus-style programmes tailored to marine jobs and cross-border cooperation. Focus on implementation of existing EU directives, avoiding policy overload. Pursue harmonised data collection strategies across and within sea basins. Adapt global governance to geopolitical and security realities, while maintaining environmental commitments.

➤ **Local table results**

Discussions at the Local Table underscored the importance of empowering local actors in marine governance, particularly when addressing the trade-offs inherent in implementing spatial measures such as marine protected areas (MPAs). Participants emphasised that local social and economic



priorities must be considered on equal footing with environmental objectives, and that alternative livelihood options should accompany any restrictions to avoid undermining community well-being. The group noted that overly ambitious, top-down agendas often fail to resonate at the local level, especially when they lack tangible pathways for implementation and resources to support transition.

Coastal co-management structures were viewed as promising platforms to facilitate inclusive governance, provided they are granted a formal mandate and supported with adequate resources. These bodies could play a pivotal role in integrating local knowledge, fostering trust, and enhancing communication between authorities, NGOs, fishers, and residents. Participants stressed the need for early engagement in planning processes, access to scientific and practical knowledge, and educational tools tailored to local conditions. However, many noted that limited funding, unclear roles in spatial planning, and insufficient structural support continue to constrain local capacity to act meaningfully. Without mechanisms such as participatory budgeting and formal integration into national strategies, local contributions risk remaining symbolic rather than substantive.

➤ **National table results**

At the National Table, discussion centred on the need to modernise governance structures and overcome entrenched sectoral silos. Participants highlighted that national strategies often lag behind evolving global targets and lack the flexibility to respond to rapidly changing environmental and socio-economic conditions. Fragmentation of responsibilities across ministries, combined with a limited science-policy interface, were seen as major obstacles to effective coordination. The group called for more agile institutions capable of updating goals and processes in real time, and for the creation of independent advisory bodies that could function similarly to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) or ICES within the marine domain.

Participants also stressed the importance of supporting “blue pioneers” and transformative initiatives through funding, education, and regulatory reform. This includes developing alternative indicators for success that go beyond gross domestic product (GDP) and integrating marine issues with land-based policies and planning frameworks. National-level actors were encouraged to deepen stakeholder engagement and adopt more inclusive governance models that integrate both research outputs and local feedback. Concerns were raised about the adequacy of existing consultation mechanisms and the risk that managerial inertia or lack of political will, could undermine implementation of otherwise well-designed strategies.

➤ **Global table results**

The Supranational Table focused on the challenge of turning high-level ambition into coherent, actionable governance across EU member states and international frameworks. Participants generally welcomed the Mission Ocean initiative but criticised its abstract language and inconsistent translation into regional and local contexts. There was strong support for embedding Mission objectives into all relevant EU funding instruments, such as the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), and for harmonising related directives like the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and Water Framework Directive (WFD) to avoid duplication or policy drift. Policy coherence, legal alignment, and improved data-sharing mechanisms were seen as critical for success.

A particularly compelling proposal was the establishment of a new, intermediate governance level akin to Nordic cooperation or Erasmus-style exchanges, that could facilitate regional alignment and



experimentation. This “fourth level” might support cross-border problem solving, legal innovation, and long-term resilience. However, participants also warned that too much flexibility at the supranational level risks reinforcing disparities between member states and placing undue implementation burdens on under-resourced regions. Calls were made for stronger public consultation processes, clearer feedback loops between scales, and the development of legal tools to respond to biodiversity emergencies and emerging geopolitical pressures. The need to operationalise rights-based approaches, including rights for nature, was also raised as a long-term objective requiring further exploration.

Prioritisation and Evaluation of Actions

In the final session, participants voted on the proposed actions for each governance level using the **Ocean Resilience Scorecard** method, which assessed **feasibility**, **resilience**, and **scalability** (1 = not likely/practical, 5 = very likely/practical). Actions with the highest scores—marked in bold in the lists above—will be integrated into refined “best-case” governance scenarios for the next phase of Mission Ocean implementation.

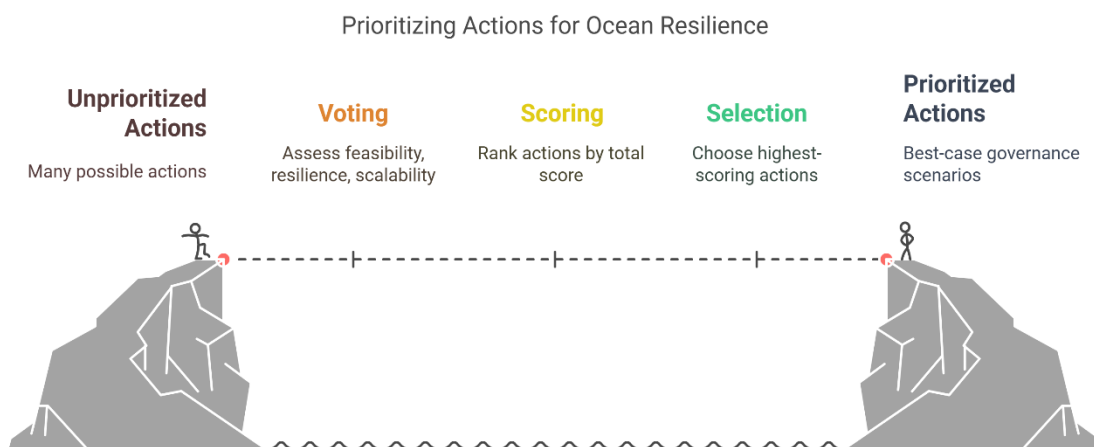


Figure 20 Visual of the prioritisation process made with Napkin

Local level Ocean Resilience Scorecard:

The top two actions to move forward with from the local level scenario refinement were the following:

- 1) **Strengthen dialogue between local and higher governance levels**, ensuring that the voices of communities, such as fishers, are heard and integrated.
- 2) **Integrate local knowledge into research and decision-making**, while also improving access to current scientific results.

From these actions the WS participants ranked the feasibility, resilience and scalability of these actions. For the action point **1)** The average score was **3.8 for feasibility** of this action, a **4.1 for**



resilience and scalability. For action point **2)** The score was a **5 for feasibility** and a **4.5 for resilience and scalability.** These results suggest strong support for bottom-up approaches that include local knowledge and improved information flows between communities and decision-makers. Moving forward, local-level implementation of Mission Ocean could prioritise mechanisms that enable co-production of knowledge and sustained dialogue across governance levels.

National level Ocean Resilience Scorecard:

The top two actions to move forward with from the national level scenario refinement were the following:

- 1) **Encourage the integration of land-based and emerging sectors** within blue economy strategies.
- 2) **Facilitate cross-ministerial cooperation** to reduce policy fragmentation and foster agile governance.

From these actions the WS participants ranked the feasibility, resilience and scalability of these actions. For the action point **1)** The average score was **3.2 for feasibility** of this action, a **4 for resilience** and **5 for scalability.** For action point **2)** The score was a **4.5 for feasibility** and a **5 for resilience and scalability.** The high scores for cross-ministerial cooperation underscore its perceived practicality and transformative potential for fostering coherent, adaptive governance. To advance Mission Ocean nationally, efforts should focus on breaking down policy silos and aligning blue economy strategies with both established and emerging sectors.

Global level Ocean Resilience Scorecard:

The top three actions to move forward with from the global level scenario refinement were the following:

- 1) **Accelerate implementation at the global level**, ensuring timely action aligned with sustainability goals.
- 2) **Improve policy coherence** and multi-level governance communication.
- 3) Pursue **harmonised data collection** strategies across and within sea basins.

From these actions the WS participants ranked the feasibility, resilience and scalability of these actions. For the action point **1)** The average score was **3.3 for feasibility** of this action, a **3.5 for resilience** and **unranked for scalability.** For action point **2)** The score was a **4 for feasibility** and a **5 for resilience** and **scalability was unranked.** **3)** The average score was **3.8 for feasibility** of this action, **no rankings for resilience** and **4.2 for scalability.** The emphasis on policy coherence and harmonised data collection highlights a strong demand for globally coordinated yet flexible frameworks that can support regional implementation. Moving forward, global-level efforts should prioritise enabling structures for timely action, clearer communication across governance levels, and interoperable data systems to guide decision-making.



The following action points were agreed upon at the 4th Mission Arena’s end plenary with all conference participants voting:

1. **Establish and expand national Mission Hubs** to foster cross-ministerial cooperation and to actively support the transformation of the blue economy sector.
2. **Support the implementation of the European Ocean Pact** through better coordination of existing EU directives and align relevant policy areas to ensure coherence on the supranational level.
3. **Develop and implement localised action plans** in the BANOS region rooted in science-policy interfaces, citizen engagement and capacity building.

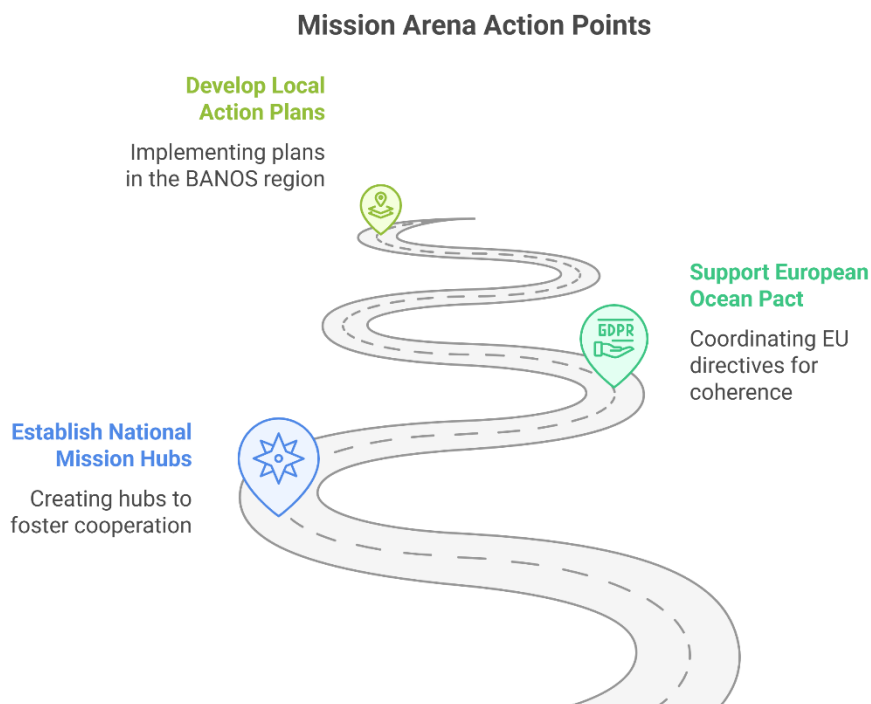


Figure 21 Overview of the fourth Mission Arena's action points made with Napkin

3.4.5 CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Overall, WS3 offered the opportunity to assess not only the desirability but also the practical viability of governance pathways envisioned in earlier stages of the BMB foresight process. Through targeted discussions and prioritisation exercises, participants validated a set of high-potential actions that could underpin a more integrated and adaptive ocean governance system in the BANOS region. The evaluation process highlighted strong support for cross-scale knowledge co-production, institutional responsiveness, and the embedding of Mission Ocean goals within existing governance frameworks and funding instruments. While feasibility scores highlighted the challenges of political coordination and resource constraints, especially at the national and supranational levels, the results also pointed to clear, actionable steps that can be taken to advance more inclusive, resilient, and scalable governance solutions. These findings will directly inform the refinement of best-case governance scenarios and the development of Mission Ocean implementation roadmaps which is examined later in the deliverable.

3.5 INTERNAL WORKSHOP ‘CHECKING PROGRESS’

3.5.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The BMB Governance WS took place on April 24, 2024, as part of the 2nd BMB Mission Arena. The main event was held on April 25-26, 2024, at the H2O 6 kvartāls event hall in Riga, Latvia. This Mission Arena convened nearly 200 participants from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden, and other regions to discuss and collaborate on advancing a CNCBE.

The Mission Arena focused on regional actors from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, and Eastern Sweden, providing stakeholders with opportunities to engage with current and future initiatives in the area. Over the two days, participants showcased progress, addressed ongoing challenges, and planned subsequent steps to transform the region's blue economy. The event culminated in a vote on the Roadmap towards the success of the Mission Ocean and Waters for the region during the final Mission Assembly.

The discussions encompassed both marine environments and inland water bodies, such as lakes, rivers, and wastewater systems. Topics included fisheries and aquaculture, shipping and ports, nutrient and pollution leakage, waterborne transport, nature protection and restoration, sustainable products, and actions required to transform these sectors. The event featured 15 specific WS themes, encouraging active contributions from participants.

Following the Mission Arena, a Roadmap for the Arena 2 region was published, outlining prioritised actions across six policy fields. This Roadmap aims to guide efforts in the coming months and years, contributing to the development of a CNCBE.

The success of the 2nd Mission Arena has set the stage for the 3rd Mission Arena, scheduled to take place in Amsterdam in November 2024.

3.5.2 OVERVIEW & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the context of BMB, governance plays a pivotal role in aligning local, national, and EU-level actions with the overarching objectives of the Mission Ocean initiative. Governance, in this setting, refers to the frameworks, institutions, mechanisms, and processes through which collective decision-making and resource allocation are coordinated across multiple stakeholders to achieve the sustainable transformation of marine and coastal environments. Understanding governance concerning BMB goals is essential to ensuring coherent, multi-level implementation and the effective mobilisation of key actors. Based on the objectives of the initiative and the upcoming strategic activities, the following RQs have been identified:



Research Question	Focus
RQ 1	How can we define "governance" in the context of BMB's objectives and Mission Ocean's ambitions?
RQ 2	What are the incentives and motivations of national and local actors to engage with the Mission Ocean initiative?
RQ 3	What key outcomes and insights are required from ongoing research and engagement to inform the structure and content of the 'HOW' WS planned for November?
RQ 4	What components and messages should be included in the BMB policy briefs to ensure they are relevant, actionable, and targeted toward national and EU-level policymakers?
RQ 5	How should the foresight report, based on iterative WS results, be structured to effectively support long-term strategy and decision-making?

The reasonings behind the questions are as follows:

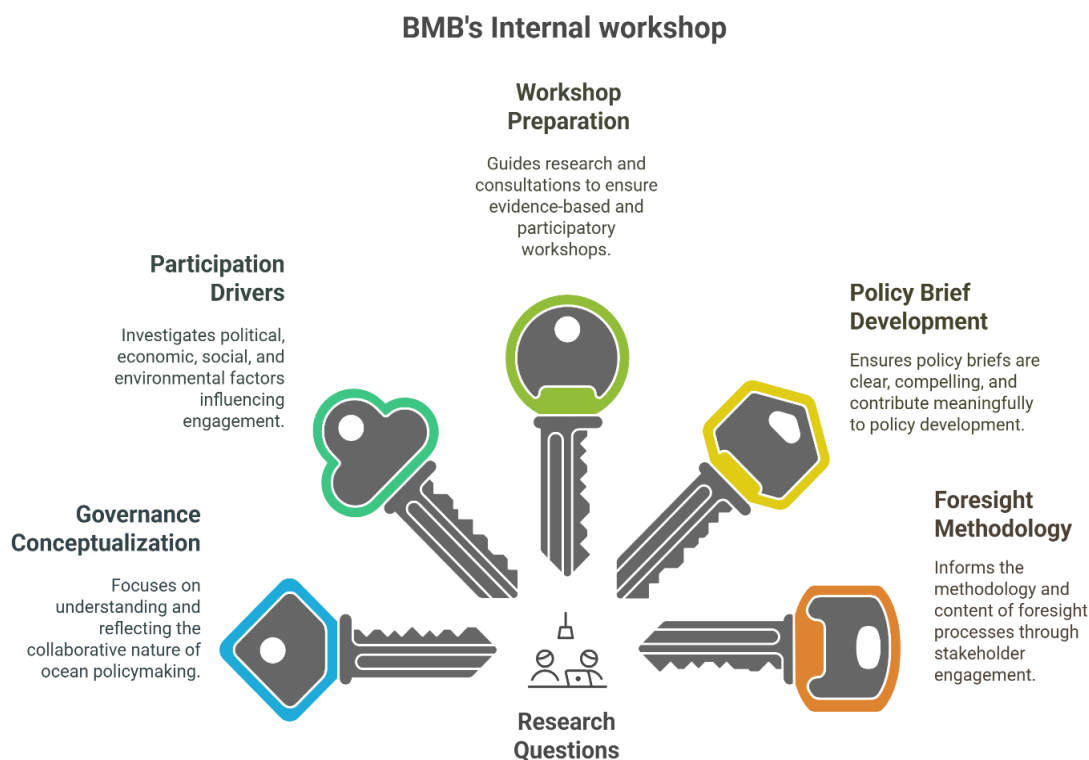


Figure 22 Guidance towards the RQs from the internal workshop

These RQs guided the design and implementation of future activities, including the development of individual policy briefs aligned with each of BMB's objectives. The overarching aim was to create outputs that are actionable and relevant to both national governments and EU policymakers, enabling them to integrate BMB insights into broader Mission Ocean and blue economy strategies.



3.5.3 STAKEHOLDERS

Including facilitators, the WS included more than **two dozen attendees** from across a broad range of backgrounds. The most common of these included national government officials, research institutes, universities, and project management firms. Together, these attendees represented **17 different EU organisations**. In more detail:

Sectors Represented at Riga Internal Workshop

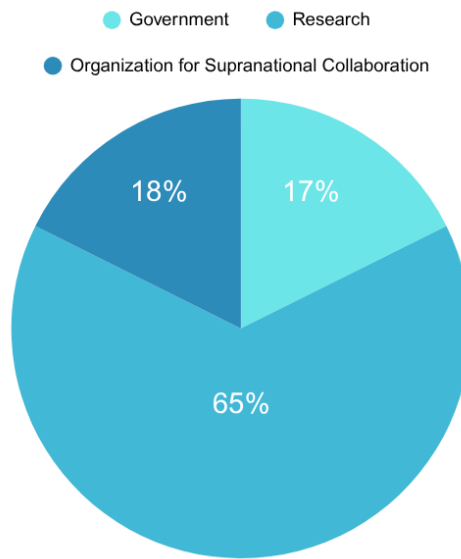


Figure 23 Pie graph representing the percent of each sector type attending the Riga Internal WS

Countries represented at Riga Internal Workshop

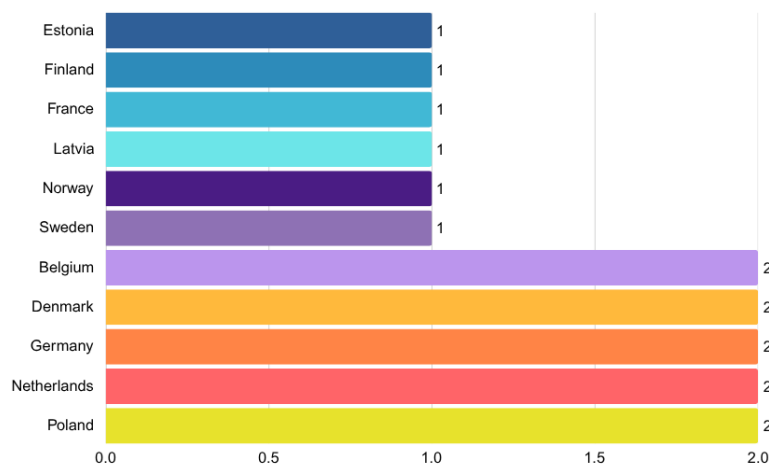


Figure 24 Bar graph representing the number of individuals from each country or region attending the Riga Internal WS



3.5.4. RESULTS

During the WS, the discussions in the small group work sessions highlighted **the need for a robust and inclusive governance structure aligned with the goals of the BMB. Governance** in this context was defined as a multilevel decision-making process that actively involves both formal institutions and informal actors. In their view, it should foster an enabling environment for coordination, knowledge sharing, and participation across legal, financial, political, and administrative dimensions. Emphasising the **importance of distributing power and responsibilities**, the group also underlined the necessity of incorporating local knowledge and ensuring that regional stakeholders play an integral role in shaping governance frameworks.

Participants identified a broad range of incentives that the Mission Ocean initiative offers to national and local actors. These include access to diverse funding sources (EU, national, and private), enhanced political visibility and leadership opportunities, and support for innovation and the development of new technologies. They believed that the initiative also promotes environmental sustainability and provides capacity-building resources, access to critical data and knowledge networks, and long-term economic benefits through the growth of the blue economy. Furthermore, the WS participants credited **BANOS** with offering stakeholders the **opportunity to actively co-create and influence policy, making their involvement both strategic and rewarding.**

According to participants, the foresight WS should serve as a strategic platform to envision and plan sustainable marine futures. Suggested components include the development of future-use scenarios, identification of transition pathways, and tailored approaches specific to regional contexts. Key elements include backcasting from 2030 to identify necessary actions, addressing trade-offs and risks, and highlighting enabling factors for success. In their opinion, the process should draw on stakeholder input to determine priority themes and focus on practical implementation strategies. Policy briefs developed from these insights should offer clear, evidence-based recommendations that reflect multilevel governance and resonate from local to EU levels. They considered it crucial that the briefs would feature scalable practices and success stories, with targeted messaging tailored to different stakeholder audiences. A proposed idea was a **dedicated brief on governance structures to guide coordinated action.**

These views and opinions of the participants are described in Figure 25.



BMB Participants' Views




Characteristic	Governance Definition	Mission Ocean Incentives	Policy Brief Content	Foresight Workshop Content
 Key Elements	Network steering actions toward goals	Enhanced visibility and stakeholder engagement	Hierarchy of actions and policy recommendations	Lighthouse CSAs and collaboration models
 Benefits	Coordination, guidance, facilitation, accountability	Streamlining, funding, and access to tools	Sustainability framework and governance structures	Stakeholder involvement and visioning future seas
 Recommendations	Balanced framework for Mission Ocean goals	Contribution to regional climate goals	Implementation mechanisms and efficient permit processes	National hubs and continuity planning post-BMB

Figure 25 View of participants in the BMB project and the second Mission Arena

After the WS, and deriving from the results described above, the facilitators elaborated a survey for the participating institutions to follow-up on, with the objective of prioritising the results and adding further important aspects related to the Governance WP in BMB.

4. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

4.1 OVERVIEW

The foresight process supporting this deliverable was built upon four workshops and continuous engagement with stakeholders throughout the BMB project. These workshops allowed for an iterative process of co-creating future governance pathways for the Mission Ocean implementation in the BANOS region. Figure 26 illustrates the foresight mapping process used as a structure to gain stakeholder insight across the workshops. Each visual element used throughout this section serves a dual purpose: First, as a summary of key participatory findings; and second, as a visual tool for policy-makers, researchers, and future Mission Ocean implementers.

Navigating the Future with Foresight



Figure 26 Overview of the foresight mapping process

The figures in this section were generated using [Napkin AI](#), a visual design platform tailored for system mapping. This allowed for post-workshop synthesis of the results by translating summaries and stakeholder narratives into communicable visual narratives. These types of tools ensure that complex governance insights are more accessible and easier to integrate into policy briefs and strategic planning. These visuals are designed to be used in future Mission-related governance planning to start conversations, identify intervention points, and clarify how governance pathways can be built or scaled in the next phase of the Mission Ocean implementation. In the next part, a detail of each visual is presented.



4.2 VISUAL SUMMARIES FROM THE FORESIGHT MAPPING

This section presents the key multi-level governance scenarios as identified through the foresight mapping process. These scenario visuals serve both as a documentation of best practices and as dynamic policy tools to guide future implementation of the Mission Ocean. Each figure reflects a different level of governance and outlines a way to ensure the Mission Ocean objectives can be delivered with flexibility in the BANOS region.

4.2.1 LOCAL BEST PRACTICE SCENARIOS

Strengthening Local Governance Through Dialogue

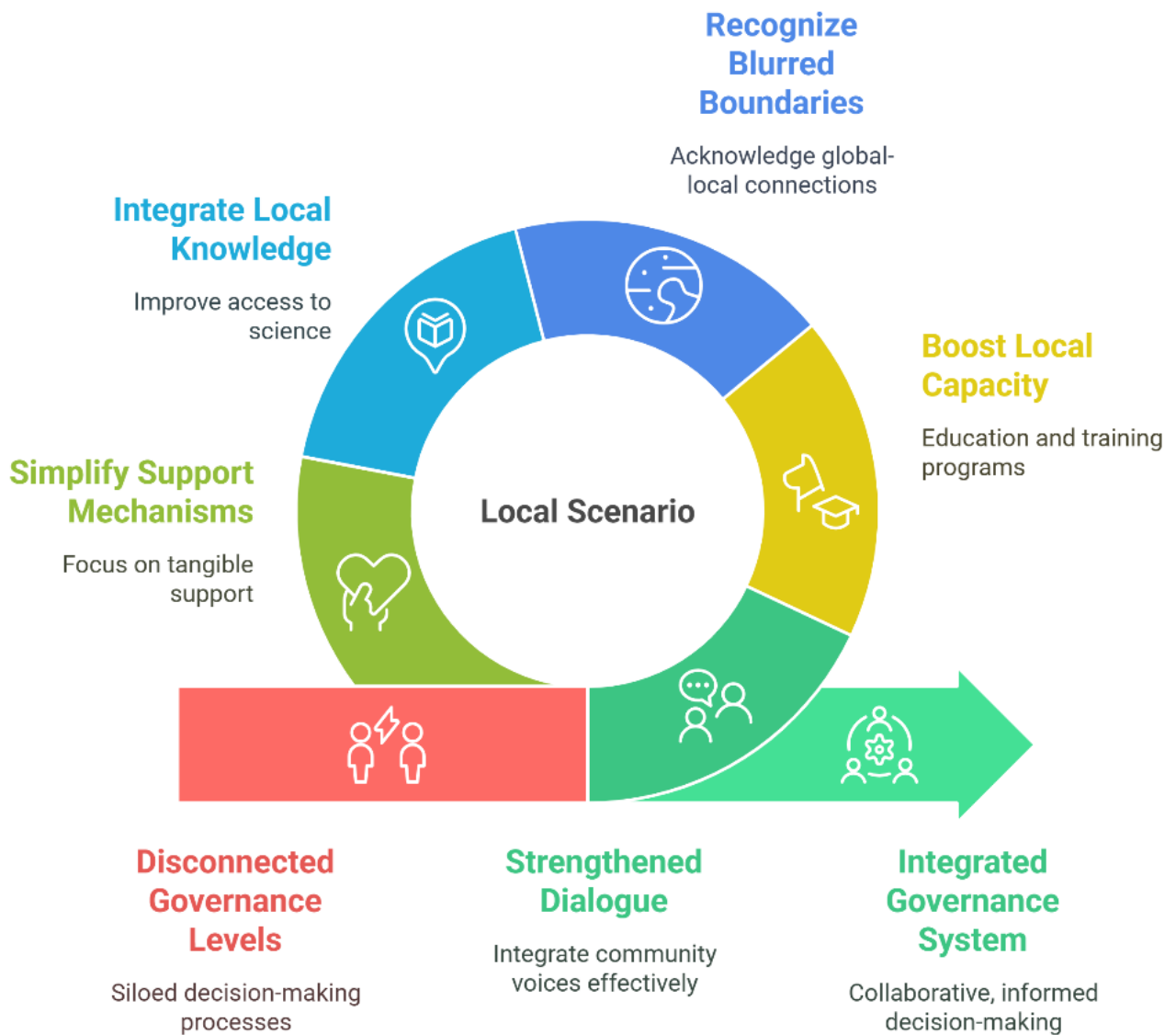


Figure 27 Strengthening Local Governance in the BANOS region through Dialogue and Integration



The local level visual highlights how bottom-up engagement and local knowledge systems are enablers of a successful Mission Ocean. Drawing on outputs from the series of workshops, the scenario shows how inclusive governance at the community level can serve as the foundation for broader Mission implementation.

Key features of the local scenario include:

- Early integration of coastal communities into the planning and policy process.
- Participatory budgeting and co-designing structures
- Two-way communication between local actors and national ministries

By focusing on knowledge co-production, and practical tools for implementation this scenario suggests a governance model that values local realities to best contribute to the Mission Ocean success.

4.2.2 NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SCENARIO

This visual was selected based on a phrase repeated by stakeholders during WS2 and WS3: the urgent need to "break the chains" at the national level. These "chains" referred to entrenched bureaucratic silos, fragmented mandates, and rigid institutional cultures that inhibit systemic governance transformation. The scenario presents a best-case future where these barriers are overcome and national-level governance becomes an engine for coherent and inclusive implementation of the Mission Ocean objectives.

Pathway towards best case national governance scenario



Figure 28 Breaking the Chains: Unlocking National Governance for Mission Ocean Delivery in the BANOS region



Key features of the National level scenario include:

- Cross-ministerial task forces focused on blue economy integration.
- Success indicators beyond GDP that reflect social and ecological outcomes.
- Government support mechanisms for innovation startups and "blue pioneers".

By breaking administrative chains and enabling strategic collaboration across sectors, this scenario identifies the national tier as a critical platform for scaling Mission goals. It also lays the foundation for the next phase of implementation: the creation of Mission Hubs. These national-level platforms will serve as meeting points where policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders convene to align efforts, exchange knowledge, and coordinate actions to advance the Mission across governance levels.

4.3.2 EU/INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE SCENARIO

At the supranational level, this scenario reflects the collective ambition of aligning Mission Ocean objectives with broader EU strategies such as the Ocean Pact, MSFD, and EU Directives. It incorporates insights from all workshops, with particular emphasis on WS3's scenario evaluation and prioritisation exercise.

Key features include:

- Coordinated implementation of existing EU directives.
- Creation of an intermediate governance level (e.g. Nordic cooperation).
- Harmonised data collection and science-policy interfaces.
- Erasmus-style exchanges to promote governance learning across borders.

The figure below underscores the need for an EU governance structure that is not only coherent and ambitious but also responsive to geopolitical and ecological pressures. It situates the EU as both a regulator and a facilitator, guiding Member States and stakeholders toward unified action.



**Pathway towards best case supranational
governance scenarios**

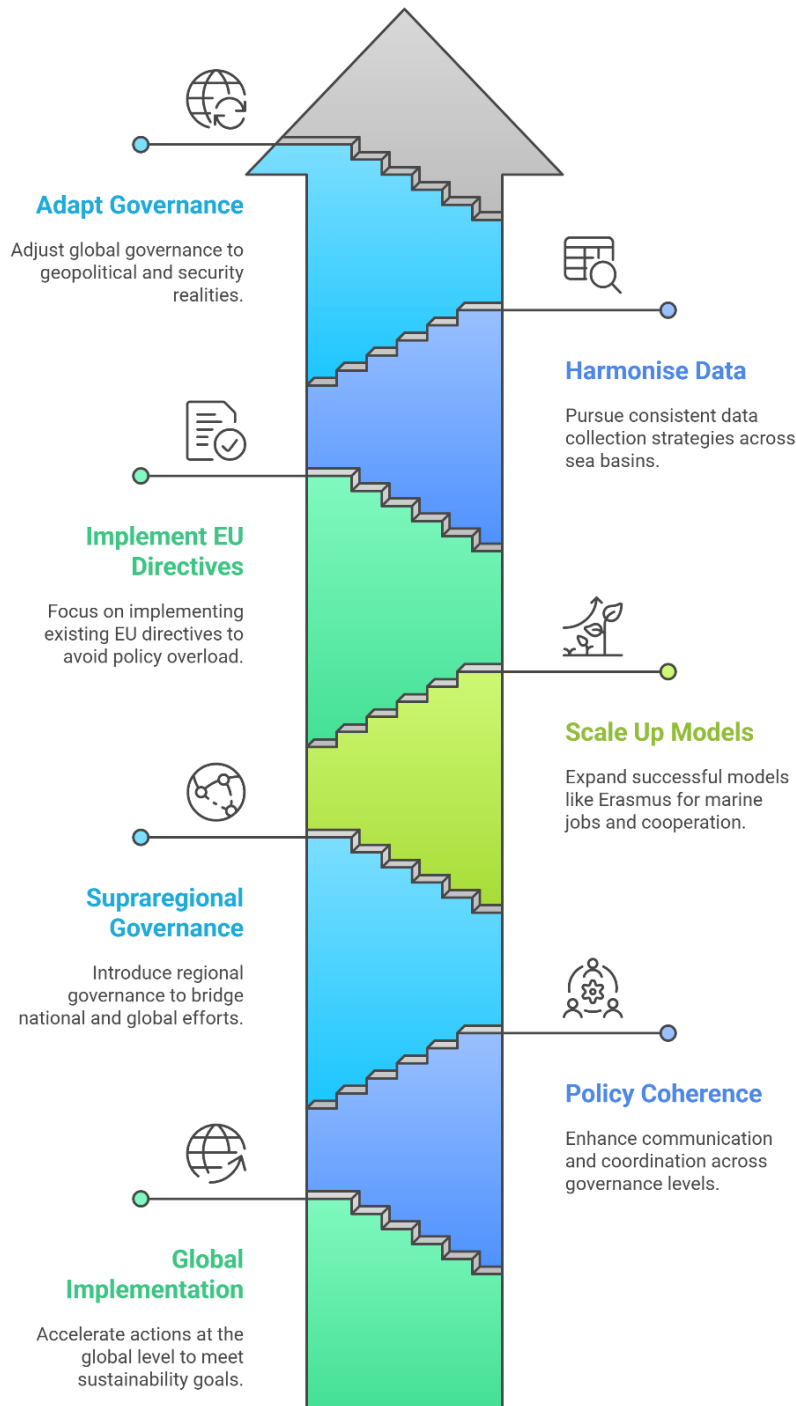


Figure 29 Aligning Directives and Data for Mission-Scale Implementation and the EU and International Levels



These visuals synthesise the main points identified in the three foresight WSs to show the pathways for strengthening the Mission Ocean governance at the supranational, national, and local levels under the BMB project. Together, these three graphics provide scenarios to emphasise the importance of vertical and horizontal policy coherence via inclusive participation. At the **Supranational level**, success requires aligning data, scaling models of cooperation, and aiding in implementing existing EU directives. This scenario was grounded in the need to advance EU structures we already have while adapting to our current geopolitical realities. At the **national level**, pathways were prioritised regarding sectoral integration, advancing financial mechanisms, and increasing cross-ministerial cooperation, anchored by citizen involvement to reach realistic targets. Finally, the local level scenario demonstrates that we must overcome our siloed systems of implementation by providing financial and technical support and boosting local dialogue to integrate locally tailored knowledge.

Final suggested paths forward:

- **Bridging levels of governance** by prioritising policy coherence and communication mechanisms across national and local actions.
- **Coordinate and harmonise data and models** transnationally to support common EU goals and reduce redundancy
- **Invest in capacity building** through education, finance, and advisory systems to support transitions at every scale.
- **Recognise local realities** by integrating community voices into adaptive, science-based governance frameworks.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The final conclusions of this deliverable reflect a structured, stakeholder-informed foresight process which identified actionable governance pathways to support the long-term implementation of Mission Ocean objectives in the BANOS region. Framed within a collaborative and iterative methodology, the three external and one internal WSs served as anchor points for mapping existing institutional landscapes, testing assumptions, and stress-testing scenarios across governance scales. These engagements reaffirmed that while many institutional structures, such as JPI Oceans, the European Marine Board (EMB), ICES, and national-level regulatory platforms, already exist, their current configuration lacks the connective infrastructure and feedback loops necessary to address systemic complexity. The conceptual map from WS1 illustrates this, with key bottlenecks forming around governance complexity, communication gaps, and unclear prioritisation mechanisms. The need is not for new institutions, but for enhanced coordination across levels and sectors, underpinned by transparent processes and digital integration. WS2's rose, thorn, bud, exercise helped to overcome these shortcomings, and finally the scenario development in WS3 paved the way for the next phase of Mission Ocean implementation.

An important aspect that came about during the course of this deliverable was the Ocean Pact. This pact falls within the supranational level of governance and is situated within the broader ambitions of the UN Ocean Decade, which emerged from this process as a strategic enabler that has the potential to increase policy coherence and cross-sectoral commitment. But as highlighted in both foresight mapping and stakeholder WSs, the Pact must be implemented with attention to pre-existing



governance capacities and embedded institutional mandates. This requires recognising and reinforcing successful regional and supranational platforms while also creating functional bridges to local actors and demonstration projects. The Mission Bus metaphor from the storyboarding sessions captures this well. Knowledge and policy instruments must be mobile, communicable, and tailored to the needs of various governance scales. Stakeholders repeatedly underscored the importance of flexibility and iterative learning, pointing to a desire for governance mechanisms that are both visionary and operationally grounded. From DG MARE, this will mean a shift from programme oversight to active orchestration, linking financial tools, regulatory levers, and institutional actors to facilitate the Pact's implementation.

Moving forward, the results of the foresight process provide a coherent direction of next steps for the Mission Ocean. Stakeholders are not asking for more ideas, but for pathways to act on what is already known. With the Ocean Pact and the foresight-based governance scenarios as foundations, the priority must now shift toward embedding these insights into policy and programme planning. This includes clearer mandates for cross-sector task forces, funding support for digital and participatory infrastructures, and continued alignment between research, market mechanisms, and regulation. As new agenda items arise, whether through the evolving Mission Ocean framework or adjacent EU policy developments, these findings provide both an evidence base and a compass for next steps. The Ocean Pact, in this view, is not a destination but a starting point: the challenge now is to move from conceptual clarity to strategic coordination and sustained impact.



1. WORKSHOP INVITES

Invitation to participate in the research project BlueMissionBanos:

Supporting the Mission Ocean Lighthouse in the Baltic and North Sea basins

Background and Goal

The aim of the BlueMissionBanos-project (2022-2025) will inspire, engage and support all relevant stakeholders across the BANOS area to take the necessary actions to make the Blue Economy carbon-neutral and circular by 2030.

A key component of BMB is the integration and engagement of stakeholders throughout the BANOS area. Based on the extensive Blue Actor's Map hosted by SUBMARINER (www.submariner-network.eu/actorsmap) we will develop an enhanced BANOS stakeholder database. BMB partners have appointed internal "National Focal Points" (NFP) to act as intermediaries between the BMB WP leads and stakeholders in the relevant country or region. The NFPs will map and identify relevant stakeholders, initiatives and synergies within the BMB focus areas and across. The BANOS area is challenged by the fact that it covers two very different sea-basins, which traditionally have different transnational cooperation structures. Therefore, we require workshops with national and regional stakeholders to address key regulatory and governance gaps in achieving a carbon-neutral blue economy in the Baltic and North Seas.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The BlueMissionBanos project is coordinated by SUBMARINER in Germany. BlueMissionBanos has chosen to follow a user engagement strategy and facilitate several workshops during the project period. to develop medium- to long-term scenarios by incorporating diverse expert knowledge. Workshops use a participatory and iterative approach to explore a variety of perspectives, consistent with the principle of consultation, involvement, and collaboration with stakeholders. These workshops and interviews related to the testing, validation and optimization of the project are planned and facilitated by the SINTEF Ocean, from Norway in collaboration with PtJ in Germany.

The project is financed through HorizonEurope. The project, which takes place from 2022-2025, has 17 partners.

Why were you asked to participate in the BlueMissionBanos project?

You were selected and asked to be part in this study because of your background within national governance and implementation of the Mission Ocean objectives The partners and their contact networks chose a selection of stakeholders that would be best suited for this workshop setting in terms of experience and interest.

What does it mean to participate?

You are a critical part of this project, as your participation in the workshop will validate the results and enable us to ensure that the app is user friendly and gives the expected results, both in terms of its concrete usage and the incentives that are built in. Your willingness to share your expertise and experiences as such is of utmost importance for the output of the project and for the further developments later in the project period. During this workshop, we will inform you about the BlueMissionBanos project and ask you to discuss practi-



cal solutions and explore policy recommendations to align with the Mission Ocean objectives from a personal perspective. The workshop will focus on a number of factors that we encourage you to discuss and speculate around in terms of how you perceive that each will affect achieving a governance framework towards a sustainable blue economy. The whole session will last 90 minutes. We will record the session for quality purposes, which you may refuse at any time.

It is voluntary to participate

It is voluntary to participate in this study. You are not obliged to participate, and you may at any time choose to withdraw your consent to take part in this project.

GDPR and personal data collected in the project

We will not collect direct personal information about you in this project – however we will collect it indirectly. First, we will have recordings of your consent to participate and tape recordings of the workshops and interviews themselves for quality purposes. We will delete the latter when the workshops are transcribed – at the end of the project period at the latest (36 months from 01. Jan 2023). Your consent will be deleted at the end of the project period (30. December 2025).

We will only use your information for the purposes described in this letter. All information from the study – including surveys – will be treated with confidentiality, and the data will be anonymized by the end of the project or deleted. You will never be identified when results are published.

SINTEF has hired SIKT – Norwegian Centre for Research Data – to assess whether the BlueMissionBanos project will process personal data in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation. They consider the treatment of personal information, as described in this letter, is in accordance with GDPR.

Your rights

As long as you may be identified through the data material, you have a right to:

- Find out what personal data we have registered about you;
- Have corrected any personal data that are wrong;
- Have deleted any personal data we have on you;
- Have a copy of your personal sent to you (data portability); and
- Send a complaint to the Data Protection Administrator or the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) about the use of your personal data in this project.

What gives us the right to treat your personal data as described above?

We treat your personal data after you give us your consent either orally or written.

Where can I find more information?

If you have questions about the workshop, contact Dorothy Dankel, Senior Research Scientist at SINTEF Ocean, (Dorothy.Dankel@sintef.no). You may also contact the project's Data Protection Officer, Håkon Tranvåg (privacy@sintef.no) or Careen Krüger, Scientific Officer at Project Management Juelich at (c.krueger@ptj.de)

Written consent

I have received and understood information about the BlueMissionBanos project, and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I consent to:



- Participate in a workshop
- Answer a questionnaire
- That my personal data (recordings of workshop) are stored after the session until transcribed or by the end of the project period at the latest.

I consent to all my personal data are treated until the conclusion of the BlueMissionBanos project.

(Name of participant)

(Date and place)

(Signature of participant)

