



BLUE MISSION BANOS

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

**Deliverable 2.6
Policy Briefs on an Effective
Governance Structure**

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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, inspires, engages, and supports stakeholders across the BANOS region in taking positive action to reach the Mission Ocean objectives. In particular, the uptake of a sustainable, carbon-neutral, and circular blue economy is facilitated 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 a climate-neutral and circular sustainable blue economy, BlueMissionBANOS supports the prevention and elimination of water pollution, as well as the protection and restoration of biodiversity and marine and freshwater ecosystems. The project focuses 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 preservation of oceans, seas, and waters through 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 facilitates synergies and matchmaking between actors working towards achieving the Mission Ocean objectives in the BANOS area. To that end, BlueMissionBANOS organised regional pilot demonstration arenas (Mission Arenas), systematically bringing together innovators, business support and training organisations, authorities and other local stakeholders from a geographically defined area to collaborate and thus accelerate the uptake of innovative solutions in support of Mission Ocean. As part of the project, BlueMissionBANOS provides a catalogue of projects, partners involved and technical expertise and solutions to foster progress, collaboration and knowledge sharing. Furthermore, BlueMissionBANOS develops a consistent monitoring framework to assess progress in achieving carbon neutrality and circularity.

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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

Policy briefs play a crucial role in delivering complex knowledge on urgent societal challenges to those responsible for making decisions. They translate extensive research and factual evidence into concise, actionable guidance for policy. In response to pressing global concerns, particularly those affecting human health and the Earth’s ecosystems, the European Commission launched five Missions in 2021: Adaptation to Climate Change, Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, Cancer, A Soil Deal for Europe, and Restore our Ocean & Waters. These Missions aim to develop forward-looking and impactful solutions that address potential risks and help ensure a sustainable future.

Aligned with the Grant Agreement, BlueMissionBANOS (BMB) will contribute to this ambition by delivering policy briefs based on the findings of Work Package 2 (WP2) on Governance and beyond. To make the project's results accessible to a broad public, we have also decided to produce fact sheets and briefs from the work packages Citizen Engagement, Business and Innovation, Mission Monitoring, and Technical Services (WaveLinks). This means that all WPs and all partners worked on the deliverable. Depending on the length and target group, these are either fact sheets or briefs. Some of these fact sheets/briefs are addressed to policymakers in the



form of traditional policy briefs, while others are addressed to other audiences depending on their content.

As BMB reaches its conclusion, the policy briefs have become a key component of the project's exploitation plan, as they synthesise insights not only from the governance work package (WP2) but also from the broader project consortium and Mission Ocean CSA collaborations. To maximise impact, two complementary formats have been produced: short factsheets providing quick, essential messages, and extended policy briefs offering more detailed information for political and administrative decision-makers.

By combining clear evidence with tailored recommendations, the BMB policy briefs aim to guide target groups—including policymakers at EU, national, and regional levels, as well as Mission practitioners—toward informed and actionable next steps that advance the Mission's goals.

1 POLICY BRIEF – OPTIMIZING GOVERNANCE

The Policy Brief *'Optimizing Governance for Effective Mission Implementation in the BANOS region – Results from a Foresight exercise'* focuses on key findings from the BMB foresight exercise and outlines governance pathways for implementing the EU Mission Ocean & Waters in the Baltic and North Sea region. It highlights gaps in alignment, stakeholder integration, and accountability, calling for stronger policy coherence across local, national, and EU levels. Best practices include early community engagement, cross-ministerial task forces, harmonised data sharing, and transnational cooperation. The priority now is moving from vision to action, embedding these insights into policies and programs to achieve a sustainable, carbon-neutral blue economy by 2030. The comprehensive report on the BMB foresight exercise was delivered to the EC and will be published on the project's website once it has been approved: 'Deliverable 2.5: Foresight report for a governance structure to ensure achievement of the Mission in the BANOS area'

2 FACTSHEET – CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

The factsheet *'Actions and outcomes to further public stewardship of resilient, sustainable waters in the BANOS region'*, concludes actions produced and tested by the project to connect citizens, industry, authorities, and researchers to co-create solutions that strengthen public stewardship of marine environments. Overall, the factsheet emphasises that societal engagement and education are crucial enablers for achieving the Mission's environmental and economic



objectives. The BlueMissionBANOS report [,Deliverable 3.1 – Report on citizen engagement and concerns in the BANOS area with respect to sustainable blue economy’](#) serves as the basis for the factsheet.

To build this engagement, BlueMissionBANOS organised stakeholder consultation cycles at three local sites—Southern Bight, Danish Straits, and Gulf of Gdańsk—linking local priorities with regional strategy. This approach helped identify shared barriers, develop practical solutions, and adjust actions to local contexts. The effort directly engaged over 231 citizens, hosted 11 co-creation workshops, mapped 291 engagement activities, and produced 27 actionable public engagement solutions now accessible via the WaveLinks platform.

3 POLICY BRIEF – SUPPORTING ACTORS AND COMMUNITIES

The Policy Brief *‘Supporting Actors and Communities to Engage with Mission Ocean’* outlines recommendations for specific target groups that may utilise the results of BlueMissionBANOS. It aims to demonstrate how citizens, research institutions, and communities can play a more significant role in restoring oceans and waters through education, collaboration, and innovation. It covers the individual stakeholder groups and recommendations on how they can contribute to the Mission Ocean & Waters in future. Mission Ocean & Waters is well-known; now it is a matter of bringing the Mission to life through concrete actions. This policy brief provides precisely such practical examples.

4 FACTSHEET – STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

This factsheet summarises the most important information and results of the BMB methodology. This includes comprehensive stakeholder mapping and the resulting innovation cycle, including Mission Arenas, which form the core of the project. They serve as a platform for all stakeholders in the BANOS region who wish to contribute to shaping a carbon-neutral, sustainable blue economy in the future. The factsheet presents figures and facts about stakeholders, projects and topics that arose during the project lifetime. The methodology used serves as a guideline for BlueMissionBANOS, other Lighthouse CSAs, and external stakeholders (researchers, authorities, industry, civil society) to plan and implement innovation-focused activities. It is based on co-creation, collaboration, and multi-level governance. Further information on the methodology can be found in the BlueMissionBANOS report: [Deliverable 4.1 – The innovation cycle: Methodologies to accelerate implementation of innovative solutions in the BANOS](#)



5 FACTSHEET – MISSION ARENAS AND SOLUTIONS

BMB uses innovation cycles culminating in Mission Arenas (MAs)—collaborative events that connect stakeholders to showcase solutions, identify barriers, and co-create roadmaps for a carbon-neutral and circular Blue Economy. The Policy Brief ‘Mission Arenas and Solutions’ summarises the results based on innovation cycles that culminate in Mission Arenas (MAs)—two-to-three-day, in-person events designed to inspire, connect, and mobilise stakeholders across the BANOS region. These events led to the creation of four regional roadmaps, which compile 197 action points focused on enabling policies, research and innovation needs, business support, and scaling opportunities. The roadmaps serve as practical guidance for the deployment phase of the EU Mission Ocean, representing a shared commitment to driving positive change in the region.

During the closing sessions of each Mission Arena, participants, including high-level EU and national representatives, voted on the top three priority actions needed to advance Mission Ocean objectives. This participatory process helped strengthen stakeholder involvement and shape future regional and local efforts. More details on the Mission Arena results can be found on the BMB website: [BlueMissionBANOS #Supporting the Mission Ocean](#)

6 POLICY BRIEF – MONITORING FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE

The policy brief ‘*Monitoring for Transformational Change: Integrating Pathways to Impact and PESTLE in Support of the Sustainable Blue Economy*’ focuses on monitoring frameworks to support the sustainable blue economy in the Baltic and North Sea regions. The EU mission ‘Restore our Ocean and Waters’ aims to protect and restore marine ecosystems while accelerating the transition to a sustainable blue economy. To achieve this, a monitoring framework is needed that goes beyond regulatory compliance and short-term results. It must capture systemic changes, external drivers and long-term impacts. Current monitoring systems often focus exclusively on results (e.g. reports, pilot projects). However, transformative processes such as the realisation of a sustainable blue economy require adaptive and integrative monitoring. Otherwise, there is a risk that monitoring will remain fragmented and thus fail to deliver lasting value. This policy brief outlines the need for an integrated and forward-looking monitoring framework that tracks systemic, long-term changes, rather than focusing solely on short-term results.

In the policy brief, combining two proven monitoring tools is proposed for an effective monitoring framework, namely PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal) and Ptol (Pathway to Impact). This type of analysis can be used in the future to measure



progress toward achieving the Mission objectives and to demonstrate how to transition from monitoring to impact. This policy brief is based on two deliverables from the BMB project: (1) Sustainable climate-friendly; circular Blue Economy in the BANOS Area: Current Status and Assessment and Monitoring Approaches, and (2) KPIs for a carbon-neutral, circular blue economy.

This policy brief conveys clear messages regarding the need for monitoring to political decision-makers, along with specific next steps. This includes that EU and national authorities should mandate integrated monitoring, harmonise KPIs, encourage data sharing, and embed adaptive monitoring in governance structures.

7 POLICY BRIEF – DATA FORMAT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Policy Brief *‘Recommendations on data formats for KPIs and other data sources’* provides a structured approach for identifying and collecting data sources essential for monitoring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the context of a sustainable blue economy. It draws on the experience and lessons learned from the BlueMissionBANOS project to emphasise the importance of selecting data sources that are reliable, accessible, and suitable for automated collection. The preferred data acquisition methods highlighted in the brief include API protocols and structured file formats, such as CSV and JSON, which enable automated, scalable, and accurate data collection. The brief advises against using PDFs and other unstructured formats due to the challenges they pose for automation and reliable data extraction. By following these recommended practices, collaborators can contribute to a robust and efficient monitoring framework that enhances the accuracy and reliability of KPI measurement, supports evidence-based decision-making, and strengthens the capacity to track progress towards a sustainable blue economy.

8 POLICY BRIEF - OCEAN PACT

The Ocean Pact is the EU's most significant strategic document for unifying marine-related policies and activities, published in June 2025. An extensive stakeholder involvement process preceded it. At BMB, we therefore analysed the involvement of stakeholders from the BANOS region in this process (call for evidence) and their priorities regarding the issues. The main finding of the policy brief is that the European Ocean Pact offers a much-needed framework to overcome fragmentation in marine governance, strengthen collaboration across sectors, and align regional



and EU-level efforts toward sustainable ocean use. The Ocean Pact also addresses key governance gaps identified by the BMB project, such as incoherent political strategies, lack of funding and incentives, and knowledge gaps around ecological–economic trade-offs. The Ocean Pact, as a framework for an inclusive European maritime policy, addresses precisely the gaps identified in BMB and described in the report on governance structures and gaps: [Deliverable 2.4 – Existing governance structures and gap analysis in the BANOS area dedicated to Mission objectives.](#)

10 CONCLUSIONS

The policy briefs and factsheets reflect the main findings of the BlueMissionBANOS project. They summarise the key insights and are aimed at a broad audience, particularly decision-makers in politics, business, society and science. The policy briefs and fact sheets will be available online on the BMB website, circulated via newsletters and social media, and printed for distribution at events. As recommendations are always included, the documents not only present the state of the art but can also serve as guidelines for activities in Phase 2 of the Mission Ocean and Waters.



11 ANNEX – FACTSHEETS AND BRIEFS

1. Optimizing Governance for Effective Mission Implementation in the BANOS Region: <https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Optimizing-Governance-for-Effective-Mission-Implementation-in-the-BANOS-Region-1.pdf>
2. Actions and outcomes to further public stewardship of resilient, sustainable waters in the BANOS region: <https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Actions-and-outcomes-to-further-public-stewardship-of-resilient-sustainable-waters-in-the-BANOS-region-1.pdf>
3. Supporting Actors and Communities to Engage with Mission Ocean: <https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Supporting-Actors-and-Communities-to-Engage-with-Mission-Ocean-1.pdf>
4. Mission Arenas and Stakeholder Mapping Process: [https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Factsheet Stakeholder-Mapping v01.pdf](https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Factsheet_Stakeholder-Mapping_v01.pdf)
5. Mission Arenas and Solutions: [https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Factsheet MAs-Solutions v01-1.pdf](https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Factsheet_MAs-Solutions_v01-1.pdf)
6. Monitoring for Transformational Change: Integrating Pathways to Impact and PESTLE in Support of the Sustainable Blue Economy: <https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Monitoring-for-Transformational-Change-1.pdf>
7. Recommendations on data formats for KPIs and other data sources: <https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Recommendations-on-data-formats-for-KPIs-and-other-data-sources-2.pdf>
8. The EU Ocean Pact - What's in it for the BANOS region?: <https://bluemissionbanos.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/The-EU-Ocean-Pact-1.pdf>

