



ANNEX II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

SBE 2026-2029: Webinars; Twinning and Mentoring; Publications - 26 - PRO662WEB-2026

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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. Partner country

N/A

1.2. Contracting authority

Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM or Contracting Authority)

1.3. Relevant background

- Through an integrated, cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary, and multi-stakeholder approach, the UfM facilitates the convergence of efforts at Mediterranean level to drive the blue and green transition forward; to circularize and decarbonize our sea-based economies; to protect and restore marine and coastal ecosystems; and to level the playing field, delivering on fairer, more resilient, and healthier livelihoods across the region.
- On 17 November 2015, the Ministers of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) adopted the first **UfM Ministerial Declaration on Blue Economy** to strengthen the potential of the blue economy in the Mediterranean region through a maritime governance capable of providing the enabling conditions for jobs, innovation, and knowledge-based business opportunities in key Med maritime sectors.
- The [2nd UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy](#) was adopted by the 43 UfM member countries on February 2nd, 2021. The overarching objective of this ambitious Declaration is to reinforce the existing Euro-Mediterranean process on SBE, expanding the shared areas of cooperation, calling for new joint actions to speed up the post-Covid recovery, as well as to ensure the long-term sustainability of the sectors and activities of the Sustainable Blue Economy in the Mediterranean. The Declaration identifies the following priority areas of cooperation, addressing both key/strategic Med SBE sectors, as well as key enablers that can help to accelerate the Sustainable Development of those sectors:
 - ✓ Governance and the future of sea basin strategies in the Mediterranean region
 - ✓ Marine research and innovation, skills, careers, and employment
 - ✓ Sustainable food from the sea: fisheries and aquaculture
 - ✓ Sustainable, climate-neutral and zero-pollution maritime transport and ports
 - ✓ Interactions between marine litter and the blue economy
 - ✓ Coastal and maritime tourism
 - ✓ Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management
 - ✓ Marine renewable energies
 - ✓ Maritime safety and security of blue economy activities
 - ✓ Sustainable investments in the blue economy.
- Providing the framework for its operationalization, the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration was further backed in 2022 by a clear and concrete implementation framework – a Roadmap – agreed by the UfM Co-Presidency, the UfM Secretariat, and the member countries of the UfM ([UfM SBE Roadmap – September 2025](#)). In line with the 2021 Ministerial Declaration and conceived as a regularly updated ‘live document’, the Roadmap provides an overview and analysis of the joint needs, gaps, and opportunities for future support, funding and

implementation – to be launched and scaled-up from the short to the long term, for each of the ministerial priorities.

- The UfM SBE Roadmap was approved by the countries in 2022 and regularly updated since then (as well as any future endorsed UfM SBE Roadmap/Action Plan, to be shaped along the lines of the potential 3rd UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE, tentatively to be adopted in 2027). The current SBE Roadmap is a ‘live’ document, updated on an annual/regular basis, integrating progress and analysis on the state-of-the-art of each of the Ministerial priorities; a constantly updated mapping of relevant projects/programs/initiatives across the region; and key updates captured through regular reporting by the countries under the agreed results-based Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation mechanism, structured around annual reporting by the countries, regular updating of the Roadmap itself, and external and independent evaluations. The 2025 external evaluation of the Ministerial/Roadmap yielded positive results, confirming the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the overall process, with the Roadmap as key catalyst.
- The Roadmap includes an analysis of joint needs, gaps, and opportunities for future support, funding, and implementation for each of the ten thematic priorities of the 2021 Ministerial on SBE, as well as promising pathways, processes and actions that can be launched and/or scaled-up from the short to long term. The Roadmap includes continued support and close follow-up of the BlueMed Partnership (BMP), alongside the advancement of SBE investment projects.
- The 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE and its related Roadmap provide a unique political, technical, and operational framework to enable cooperation, coordination, and the convergence of efforts towards the concrete and common joint priorities set by the 2021 Ministerial. Indeed, over the past decade, SBE has emerged as a driving force and accelerator for Sustainable Development / the blue and green transition across the Med region, bringing a wide range of environmental, social, and economic benefits to citizens and to ecosystems.
- Moreover, the Mediterranean cooperation and partnership on SBE is by now a model and source of inspiration for other regions in the world. It has acted as a ‘glue’ across the region, providing fertile ground for connectivity and technical and political cooperation at all times, including throughout the current complex phase facing the region.
- In this overall framework, the rich and dynamic community of Mediterranean Sustainable Blue Economy stakeholders is at the very heart of the UfM’s SBE dossier and of the implementation of the Ministerial and its Roadmap. Beyond animating the Mediterranean Blue Economy Stakeholder Platform (MedBESP), as a key user-led online hub and one-stop-shop, fostering the strong collaborative spirit of the Mediterranean SBE, the UfM also regularly gathers this vibrant Community through dedicated Stakeholder Conferences.
- The latest iteration of this regular gathering ([2nd UfM Stakeholder Conference on SBE](#) – Athens, 19-20 February 2024) hosted by Greece, brought together in Athens over 350 participants in order to take stock of progress achieved; discuss joint challenges and transformative tools and pathways for the Sustainable Development of the sectors and activities of the Mediterranean SBE; feed the UfM SBE Roadmap and the related next steps; and set the path towards future deliberations at political level. A very rich and dynamic

cross-section of Med SBE stakeholders from across the basin took part in the Conference, affirming the strong collaborative spirit of the Mediterranean cooperation on SBE, at both technical and political level.

- Steps towards future political deliberations: Following the progress achieved on each of the 10 priorities of the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE, underpinned by the UfM Roadmap on SBE and its Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation mechanism, steps towards new political deliberations around a 3rd UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy are moving forward. They will depend on the regional context and circumstances. This process is and will continue to evolve, under the UfM EU and Jordan Co-Presidency, fully in line with recent key policy developments including the Ocean and Med Pacts.

2. OBJECTIVE

2.1. Overall Objective

The overall objective of this action consists in supporting the UfM Secretariat with a set of technical activities related to the priorities of the SBE Ministerial Declaration and Roadmap, in close coordination and collaboration with the UfM EU and Jordan CoPresidency.

2.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this technical assistance are to:

- Develop and implement a pilot SBE project twinning and a mentoring programme.
- Organize 3 webinar in to-be-selected SBE relevant topics;
- Produce 2 publications in key priority areas.

3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

3.1. Assumptions

- The ability to identify and engage relevant partners/stakeholders, ensure appropriate communication and circulation of information between partners/stakeholders, adopt an inclusive approach and use information appropriately; promote ownership.
- The degree of cooperation, involvement and willingness of the various concerned stakeholders involved to collaborate closely.

3.2. Risks

- Ineffective coordination of the activities
- Lack responsiveness of partners
- Political instability in the region; Changing priorities in beneficiary countries'; slow adjustment of activities and envisaged actions; to changing priorities in beneficiary countries.
- Overall sanitary situation



4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

4.1. Results and outputs to be achieved by the Contractor

Under the overall supervision of the UfM Blue Economy Division, within the available budget and with a reasonable distribution of resources, the contractor is expected to deliver the following outputs:

- ***A pilot SBE project twinning and a mentoring programme are fully implemented***

A first SBE project “twinning and mentoring programme” (SBE TMP) will be piloted in order to establish a dynamic peer-learning community connecting the Mediterranean Sustainable Blue Economy (SBE) policy dimension with projects/impacts/results on the ground. Through these activities, participating EU and Southern/Eastern Mediterranean actors will capitalize on shared experiences, co-develop coherent approaches, be enabled to advance/replicate at national/subnational level. Should the conceptual setting prove to work, additional funding will be sought through other donors.

The consultants are requested to propose a valid methodology, to be discussed and finetuned at TA start.

In essence, the SBE TMP will be structured around the following workstreams:

✓ Component 1 - Project twinning; To be agreed at inception, the pilot ‘project twinning’ component will aim at pooling and aligning efforts, knowledge and main outcomes of multiple flagship projects that proved particularly successful, associated to different funding programmes and initiatives relevant to SBE in the Med including EMFAF, Interreg Euro-MED, Next-MED, the Mission “Restore Our Ocean and Waters”/BlueMissionMed, etc, and the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership, creating targeted co-labs for more targeted action and impact on the ground. Details and structure will be defined at inception phase. The potential thematic focus of the ‘project twinning’ could be on (i.e.): blue skills/employment and the concept of “Blue Generational Renewal” as stated in the Ocean Pact; blue investments; Blue entrepreneurship; innovation; coastal communities; commercialization, ecosystem restoration, tourism, competitiveness/technology transfer; maritime clusters; but also governance coordination for example WestMed – EUSAIR and to be developed Eastern-Med support, etc.

✓ Component 2 - Regional/national mentoring: This regional CB/mentoring program would be targeted to national and local representatives in order to facilitate the preparation of SBE bankable projects at national and local level. It would help creating an enabling environment for strong bankable project identification and preparation, ensuring a strategic alignment with the agreed upon UfM SBE Ministerial priorities and the Ocean Pact. In such case, the programme could be inspired by the mentoring already implemented at UfM level (tender docs available under ‘closed tenders’ <https://ufmsecretariat.org/work-with-us/procurement/>) such as “Capacity building to develop bankable urban investments” and “From Research to Business” initiative, run over six/seven months and foreseeing two capacity building workshops, combining in person and online.

This activity follows the development of the first DG MARE-funded UfM Blue Finance Conference in 2022 and further BMP developments, including the EBRD, EIB, AFD first package of BMP SBE



Investment projects in Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco, launched during the UfM Segment on SBE organized during the Med Day of UNOC-3 (10 June, 2025).

The proposal for the twinning and mentoring programmes is expected to be elaborated and planned in detail over 2026, and completed between 2027 and 2028.

- ***Three webinars on SBE relevant topics are organised***

A series of three webinars, one per year, will be organized to spotlight key SBE topics, with durations ranging from 1.5 to 4 hours depending on the focus and participants involved. They will promote convergence and collaboration in line with the UfM Ministerial priorities on SBEs and the Ocean Pact. The webinars will also showcase ongoing progress and initiatives in the East-Med region, as needed. These sessions will provide stakeholders with opportunities to exchange experiences, align actions, and strengthen regional cooperation.

The preferably zoom platform will have to ensure EN, FR, AR translation.

The proposal for the twinning and mentoring programmes is expected to be elaborated and planned in detail over 2026, and run between September 2026 and February 2029.

- ***Two publications in key SBE priority areas are produced and disseminated***

Two targeted thematic publications will be produced, each averaging 10–15 pages, with a maximum of 20–25 pages. They will focus on key SBE topics, highlighting recent trends and developments. The publications will also examine ongoing initiatives and best practices at the Mediterranean level. Together, they aim to provide readers and stakeholders with actionable insights and a comprehensive overview of the SBE state of art in that area of work. The ready-to-be published and printed files will have to be made available in EN, FR and AR.

The proposed publications are expected to be elaborated and planned in detail over 2026, and elaborated between September 2026 and February 2029.

The Contractor shall present the above deliverables in the form of inception, interim and final report/s along the set reporting requirements illustrated in par. 7.

4.2. Project management

4.2.1. Responsible body

The TA will be managed by the UfM SBE Team assigned Manager. All issues related to the technical elements in relation to this contract, mainly the specific activities and outputs outlined in section 4.1 of these Terms of Reference, shall be taken by the project manager nominated by the contracting authority pursuant to special conditions of contract Article 2.1. The project manager will ensure these tasks in accordance with UfM internal rules and procedures.



5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

5.1. Location

The services shall be carried out from remote, with regular/weekly communication with the UfM Secretariat(Barcelona).

Missions to UfM, UfM countries or events shall be included in the financial proposal of the tender. Missions will be agreed with the managing authority and if sanitary conditions allow.

An estimate of maximum 10 missions, for a max 3 days each if necessary, can be considered if not otherwise agreed with the Managing Authority.

5.2. Commencement date & Period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is in July 2026 and the period of implementation of the contract shall be till 30/4/2029.

6. REQUIREMENTS

Tenders deviating from the requirements or not covering all minimum requirements described below may be rejected on the basis of non-compliance with the tender specifications and will not be further evaluated.

6.1. Staff

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration, of the partner country or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be approved to work as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well as proof that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

6.1.1. Experts

The minimum requirements covered by the team of experts as a whole are detailed below:

Qualifications and skills

- Education at least up to a university degree (where a university degree has been awarded on completion of four years study in a university or equivalent institution) in maritime affairs, management, policy, sciences, economics, statistics and other relevant fields, equivalent relevant experience and/or or degree relevant to the present assignment.
- Thorough knowledge of English, written and spoken; satisfactory knowledge of French (either as skill or through professional backstopping).
- Further knowledge of Arabic is considered an asset.

General Professional Experience:

- Minimum 10 years of proven experience in a management and/or coordination role, or any equivalent activity.
- Solid knowledge of sustainable blue economy/maritime and marine issues.



Specific Professional experience

- Experience in implementing a project of similar nature, e.g., running/coordinating a team of experts in order to organize and elaborate strategic assessments, analysis, studies and publications etc.
- Further knowledge of the specific blue economy issues in the Mediterranean is considered an asset.
- Proven experience and ability to work with multicultural teams and organizations in the Mediterranean is considered necessary.

The Organisation and Methodology should demonstrate how the contract will comply with these requirements to accomplish the desired output(s). The Organisation and Methodology may include the name of an expert and his profile. Compliance (yes/no answer) of the team (as a whole) with the requirements will be checked, but there will be no marks given to the experts.

The assignment should be carried out by a Team Leader/Coordinator together with a team of experts.

It is up to the Contractor to propose a strong methodology for the elaboration of the work to be carried out by a solid team of experts (*supported by a backstop team, as appropriate*), which can satisfactorily deliver the required tasks and produce the expected deliverables/overall results.

The interdisciplinary and multicultural team of experts – including the Team Leader/Coordinator (UfM national) plus experts (preferably from the southern and eastern med) - shall be best composed of experts from different Med sub regions.

The team of experts is expected to have a) complimentary/extensive knowledge of blue economy priority issues in the Mediterranean region as well as b) language abilities adapted to the tasks to be performed (it is expected a good combination of English, French and Arabic).

In identifying the team, it should be considered that the UfM promotes gender equality and women empowerment.

The experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities accorded to him/her.

Contractor shall ensure that all services will be provided and supported by appropriate expertise; methodology and the proposed team will be included in the offer.

6.1.2. Other experts, support staff & backstopping

The Contractor will be responsible for:

- Project backstopping, administration, and financial management
- Provision of the experts and the necessary support staff, as defined in the Terms of Reference



- Quality control and timely delivery of all outputs in line with the agreed work plan
- All support staff and backstopping costs
- All necessary equipment for the team of experts

6.2. Office accommodation

Office accommodation for each expert working on the contract is to be provided by the Contractor.

6.3. Facilities to be provided by the Contractor

The Contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular, it shall ensure that there is sufficient administrative, secretarial and interpreting provision to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support its activities under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

6.4. Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the Contracting Authority as part of this service contract or transferred to the Contracting Authority at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract, which is to be acquired must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

The Contractor is expected to work remotely using its own office equipment; when necessary and requested, the Contractor may work at UfM Secretariat premises.

7. REPORTS

7.1. Submission & approval of reports

The reports must be submitted in English to the UFM Manager. The Project Manager is responsible for approving the reports.

Following the comments received, the Contractor will send a revised version by e-mail, before formally submitting the final version.

The approved version of the final report shall be submitted in two copies (one hard copy plus **one electronic version** (MS Word format) to the Manager in charge. These final versions must be accompanied by the final invoice.

The Secretariat will provide its comments on the submitted Inception, Interim and Final reports, within 10 working days upon receipt according to the above indicated timing.



To summarize, the Contractor shall provide reports as per Table below; payments will be done accordingly:

Name of report	Content	Time of submission
Inception report	Work plan and strategy (tentative for the entire contract, more specific for year 1) to be agreed with the managing Authority	2 weeks after project start
Interim Report 1	Interim Report plus Annexes, including the developments of the twinning and mentoring program; the 3 webinars (planning, carried out, under preparation); elaboration, state of advancement, completion, publication and dissemination of the two publications in EN,FR,AR)	15 June 2026
Interim Report 2	Interim Report plus Annexes, including the developments of the twinning and mentoring program; the 3 webinars (planning, carried out, under preparation); elaboration, state of advancement, completion, publication and dissemination of the two publications in EN,FR,AR)	November 2026
Interim Report 3	Interim Report plus Annexes, including the developments of the twinning and mentoring program; the 3 webinars (planning, carried out, under preparation); elaboration, state of advancement, completion, publication and dissemination of the two publications in EN,FR,AR)	February 2027
Interim Report 4	Interim Report plus Annexes, including the developments of the twinning and mentoring program; the 3 webinars (planning, carried out, under preparation); elaboration, state of advancement, completion, publication and dissemination of the two publications in EN,FR,AR)	November 2027
Interim report 5	Interim Report plus Annexes, including the developments of the twinning and mentoring program; the 3 webinars (planning, carried out, under preparation); elaboration, state of advancement, completion, publication and dissemination of the two publications in EN,FR,AR)	February 2028
Interim 6	Interim Report plus Annexes, including the developments of the twinning and mentoring program; the 3 webinars (planning, carried out, under preparation); elaboration, state of advancement, completion, publication and dissemination of the two publications in EN,FR,AR)	November 2028
Interim 7	Interim Report plus Annexes, including the developed twinning and mentoring program; the webinars carried out; dissemination of the two publications in EN,FR,AR)	February 2029
Final technical assistance report	Description of the overall support provided, plus annexes of the specific work carried out including all material related to the final deliverables produced up to April 2029	April 2029



7.2. Language

The reporting language, as well as all writing communication between the Secretariat and the Contractor will be in English. The working languages will be English and French (and Arabic, as applicable).