



ANNEX II: TERMS OF REFERENCE

SBE 2026-2029: Governance; Roadmap; Monitoring; SBE Report - 27 - PRO661WEB-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, always providing fertile ground for connectivity and technical and political cooperation, 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 the technical capacity needed to implement the Ministerial decisions of the 43 UfM countries, both those taken through the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE and those to be formulated in the context of a future 3rd UfM Ministerial on Sustainable Blue Economy, tentatively foreseen in 2027.

All the activities will be carried out as tasked by Ministerial Mandate (the above mentioned 2021 UfM Ministerial Declarations on Sustainable Blue Economy) and in close cooperation with the EU/DGMARE/CINEA and Jordan UfM Co-Presidency on SBE. Due consideration will have to be taken of the situation in the region, to be closely monitored and assed with the Management Authority.

2.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this technical assistance are to:

- Ensure the progressive, annual update of the two key documents agreed by the countries, in close collaboration with stakeholders, usually presented at the SBE Regional Platform meetings:
 - The SBE Roadmap for the implementation of the 2021 Ministerial on Sustainable Blue Economy: <https://medblueeconomyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/file-library-ff4005cb911fe6bd9771.pdf> (September 2025)
 - The associated SBE results-based monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism (same link as above);
 - Support the factual, accurate but user-friendly presentation, communication and dissemination at the SBE Regional platform meetings and in other occasions, of the updates related to the SBE Roadmap and its Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation framework as well as of the results achieved. Usually, the SBE RP meetings take place twice a year, in hybrid format, with a preference for in person participation.

Should a new UfM SBE Ministerial Declaration be endorsed in 2027/8 by the 43 UfM countries, the elaboration and adoption of a new/revised *Roadmap for the implementation of the*

Ministerial on Sustainable Blue Economy, and its associated Results based *monitoring, reporting and evaluation framework* is expected to be agreed by the countries and stakeholders (based on the existing Roadmap and MRE mechanism);

- Support the advancements of SBE governance aspects at Med level, in particular:
 - Moving forward towards a 3rd UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy, possibly in 2027, as and if so decided by the UFM Co-Presidency and Secretariat;
 - the elaboration of the Eastern Med Initiative and/or Strategy, along the lines of the success produced by WestMed model. This might imply support in the elaboration of governance papers, including coordination among WestMed, EastMed and EUSAIR or paper/documents related to supporting the EasternMed governance and implementation mechanisms, if so required by the UFM CoPresidency;
- Attend the meetings of the SBE Regional Platform or other relevant SBE events as requested. The number of envisaged missions is specified at point 7.1
- Preparation and ready-to-publish format of the 4th edition of the UfM report '*Towards Sustainable Blue Economy*' in EN, FR and AR.

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:



Progressively updated SBE Roadmap

- 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 as summarized here below. 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, alongside the advancement of SBE investment projects.
- The UfM Roadmap for the implementation of the UfM Ministerial on Sustainable Blue Economy is to be updated on annual basis and is delivered at latest 3 weeks before the organization of the UfM Regional Platform on Sustainable Blue Economy in which it will be presented to countries and stakeholders (and if not otherwise agreed, usually the March/April SBE RP of 2027, 2028, 2029 till contract closure).

The proposed revisions, duly highlighted in track changes, will be further revised by the Managing Authority in close coordination with the UfM CoPresidency, to reach a draft final version to be shared with the Sustainable Blue Economy Focal Points (and permanent observers) as background document in advance of each BE RP meeting, when so agreed by the Managing Authority and the UfM CoPresidency.

Updates will include both the narrative part of the Roadmap as well as the updated list of relevant regional projects of different EU programs (EMFAF, Interreg EuroMed and Next Med, Horizon, etc) and bilateral donors supporting the priorities of the SBE Ministerial Declaration. (keeping track of projects opening and closing within various regional framework; by different donors; etc).

As part of the activity, it is expected that the consultants will maximize coordination and networking for the purpose of promoting the Roadmap and the sustainable blue economy process at large among blue economy stakeholders and donors in the Med region, favoring convergence of efforts, programs, projects around the Ministerial priorities. Particular attention will be placed on the coordination with the WestMed Initiative, EUSAIR, the under-shape EastMed and other relevant frameworks.

The latest version of the *Roadmap for the implementation of the UfM Ministerial on Sustainable Blue Economy* is available at <https://medblueeconomyplatform.org/vkc/news/roadmap-for-the-implementation-of-the-2021-ufm-ministerial-declaration-on-sustainable-blue-economy-a-landmark-document-for-sbe-in-the-mediterranean-1b4a4d8beb/>.

Progressively updated SBE Monitoring and reporting mechanisms

- The Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation associated to the Roadmap is updated by the member countries on annual basis, if not otherwise indicated by the October SBE Regional Platform of



2026,2027,2028. The Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation system is included in the Roadmap Document at <https://medblueeconomyplatform.org/vkc/news/roadmap-for-the-implementation-of-the-2021-ufm-ministerial-declaration-on-sustainable-blue-economy-a-landmark-document-for-sbe-in-the-mediterranean-1b4a4d8beb/>

This implies that:

- the yearly updates/presentations are compiled and analysed by the countries (*UfM Focal Points on Sustainable Blue Economy*) to monitor progress on the accomplishment of the Priorities of the 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on SBE.
- Trends over time of the quantitative indicators selected to show progress/change, are produced, compiled and analysed.
- The results achieved through the SBE Roadmap in the implementation of the 2021 Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue economy Support are highlighted, communicated and disseminated at the *Stakeholders Conferences; Hackathons; Ocean Conferences; future Ministerial etc.* up to contract closure, to be defined jointly with the UfM CoPresidency and Secretariat. The activities might consist in visually attractive papers, leaflets, presentations in EN, FR, AR, if so required.
- An external evaluation has been recently carried out and will serve the purpose to feed the potential 3rd Ministerial Declaration.

Should the 3rd UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy move forward, a renewed Roadmap and associated Monitoring, reporting and evaluation will be duly elaborated and finalised in consultation with the member countries and stakeholders.

Technical support to SBE governance related developments provided as requested

Governance aspects are usually dealt with directly by the UfM CoPresidency and Secretariat. However, support in compiling in an handy manner policy or technical documents based on existing information might be needed as follows:

- The 3rd UfM Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy is expected to move forward as of 2027. Technical updates on the ministerial priorities and background documents are expected to be provided and compiled in a handy, easy-to-read format, in EN, FR, AR, to be agreed with the managing authority;
- The EastMed is expected to advance and turn into an Initiative, along the lines of the WestMed. The UfM Secretariat will provide all due support. Technical updates on the priorities identified by the countries participating at subregional level are expected to be prepared in a handy format in EN,FR,AR to be agreed with the managing authority.
- Similarly, focused SBE governance papers, for ex. touching upon governance and coordination among WestMed, EastMed, EUSAIR and other basin strategies might be needed are expected to be elaborated for consideration by the EU and Jordan CoPresidency. Support might be needed

SBE – Report on the SBE state of the art at Med level elaborated and available in ready-to-publish format

- The 4th edition of the UfM report '*Towards Sustainable Blue Economy*' is prepared in a ready-to-



publish format in EN, FR and AR.

- The latest report dates to 2024 and is available at <https://ufmsecretariat.org/publication-speech/towards-sustainable-blue-economy-mediterranean-region-2024-edition/>

Participation to UfM SBE Regional platform and events

- Participation to max 10 SBE Regional Platform meetings and relevant events, as agreed by the managing authority and specified at point 5.1.

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 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 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)	2 weeks after project start
Interim Report 1	Interim Report plus Annexes, including latest compilation of updates on the Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; on Monitoring and Reporting document in EN, FR, AR) 3) advancements in the elaboration of the 4 th Report "Towards Sustainable Blue Economy"	15 June 2026
Interim Report 2	Interim Report plus Annexes, including latest compilation of updates on the Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; on Monitoring and Reporting document in EN, FR, AR) 3) advancements in the elaboration of the 4 th Report "Towards Sustainable Blue Economy"	November 2026
Interim Report 3	Interim Report plus Annexes, including latest compilation of updates on the Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; on Monitoring and Reporting document in EN, FR, AR) 3) advancements in the elaboration of the 4 th Report "Towards Sustainable Blue Economy"	February 2027
Interim Report 4	Interim Report plus Annexes, including latest compilation of updates on the Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; on Monitoring and Reporting document in EN, FR, AR) 3) advancements in the elaboration of the 4 th Report "Towards Sustainable Blue Economy"	November 2027



Interim report 5	Interim Report plus Annexes, including latest compilation of updates on the Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; on Monitoring and Reporting document in EN, FR, AR) 3) advancements in the elaboration of the 4 th Report “Towards Sustainable Blue Economy”	February 2028
Interim 6	Interim Report plus Annexes, including latest compilation of updates on the Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; on Monitoring and Reporting document in EN, FR, AR) 3) advancements in the elaboration of the 4 th Report “Towards Sustainable Blue Economy”	November 2028
Interim 7	Interim Report plus Annexes, including latest compilation of updates on the Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; on Monitoring and Reporting document in EN, FR, AR) 3) advancements in the elaboration of the 4 th Report “Towards Sustainable Blue Economy”	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 (final 2029 Roadmap in EN, FR and AR; final 2029 Monitoring Reporting and Evaluation report in EN, FR, AR); the 4 th Report “Towards Sustainable Blue Economy” in EN, FR, AR related analysis, problems encountered and recommendations for follow up.	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).