stakeHolders2cO-design ! Towards impactful stakeholder engagement in the Mission Ocean, Seas and Waters

Concept note – findings workshop

INTRODUCTION

Kinnie De Beule, Blue Cluster, introduction

The aim of this workshop is to finetune stakeholder engagement methodologies and their accuracy for the Mission Ocean while gathering valuable input of key experts, as well as to put all participants in contact with the relevant European network and provide with examples. Panelists will share their experience in implementing relevant stakeholder engagement methodologies and identify best practices, successes and challenges, proposing how to effectively "engage, connect and empower" stakeholders within the Mission Ocean & Waters. The second part of the workshop deals with the experiences so far with the regional smart specialization strategies, the third part serves to finetune the stakeholder engagement methodology assessment tool for the mission Oceans, Seas and Waters.

Marijn Rabaut, Blue Cluster, Mission Ocean and PREP4BLUE introduction; Sustainable Blue Economy, from Blue Cluster and working with stakeholders

Mission Ocean, Seas and Waters, the new Horizon Europe Programme for 2021-2027 is articulated around five missions, targeting the main challenges where research and innovation efforts should be concentrated. The Mission Ocean and Waters aims to restore our oceans, seas and waters by 2030, through the achievement of three main objectives:

1) Protect and restore marine and freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity
2) Prevent and eliminate pollution
3) Make the sustainable blue economy carbon neutral and circular

The implementation of the Mission is supported by transversal actions or "cross-cutting enablers" that will provide access to a digital ocean and water knowledge system (digital twin of the ocean) and guarantee broad public mobilisation and engagement throughout the implementation of the Mission.

The Mission goes beyond research and innovation and will create new forms of governance and ways to connect with the citizens. The four Mission lighthouses will act as hubs where innovative solutions will be developed, demonstrated and deployed in each basin: Atlantic-Arctic, Danube,Mediterranean, Baltic and North Sea.

The Mission will be implemented in 2 phases. The first phase of implementation (2021-2025) will set-up a dynamic ecosystem to boost the creation of innovative solutions of all forms in the lighthouses. The second phase 'deployment and upscaling' (2026-2030), will consist of supporting the transfer, uptake and upscale of R&I solutions developed in the first phase of the Mission.

PREP4BLUE is the first coordination and support action project of the Mission Ocean, seas and waters, with the overarching objective to facilitate a successful implementation of the first phase of the Mission Ocean & Waters (2022-2025) by developing the co-creation and co-implementation of R&I modalities required to achieve the Mission objectives, and preparing the ground for inspiring and engaging citizens and stakeholders.

The project will deliver relevant recommendations and methodologies on stakeholder engagement. The project team is notably mapping and assessing multidisciplinary, multi-stakeholder strategies involving industry, public

authorities, citizens, academia and associations while envisaging the natural environment as key for social innovation and to efficiently bring society closer to the ocean. In the framework of these activities, Blue Cluster, in collaboration with the CPMR organizes this workshop on 17 October 2023.

The presentation of the First Mission arena will be in Gothenburg (14-16 November) for the Nordic countries, for the Belgium and the Netherlands, please save the date on 23 May 2024, in Ostend for the kick-off.

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PART A, the challenge of Stakeholder engagement in the Mission Oceans

The first session gathers experts on stakeholder engagement that contributed to a reflection on how to engage a wide range of stakeholders in research and actual projects and that implemented relevant projects with a strong multi stakeholder co-creation approach. Each speaker will cover one specific aspect of the Mission Ocean and Waters: biodiversity, sustainable blue economy and marine pollution.

- **Matthew Smith**, Ecosystems and Natural Capital Manager, at the JNCC – Joint Nature Conservation Committee, is the co-Author of BiodivERsA Stakeholder Engagement Handbook (2008), providing best practice guidelines for stakeholder engagement in research projects on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

  How to bring society closer to the ocean and biodiversity. Pitfalls and opportunities of methodology selection

  The **handbook of effective stakeholder engagement** promotes cross cutting interdisciplinarity, integration of actors, delivery of academic excellence, improvement of societal impact, support for researchers conducting SHE and inclusivity in SHE, enhanced legitimacy societal relevance, visibility of research/EU investments, assurance that SHE keeps on going until the end of the projects.
  Getting an agreement on complex issues is not straightforward: consider methods and available tools, communicate decisions and outcomes.

  What do define: why to engage; who you choose; how to engage them; when you engage them; identify and manage conflict;, review, assess and report.

  SHE-Credible-Relevant-Legitimate (CReLe)

  - **Credibility:** transparency, define objectives, maintain relations and build trust thought the life cycle;
  - **Relevance:** usefulness of SHE and outcomes. Understandable languages, respect of timing, identification and planning, assure the impact is real;
  - **Legitimacy;** perceived fairness, balanced SH participation, recognize conflict inherent/valuable, manage conflict and dissent.

  Key points for effective SHE: engage SH as equal, value all shared knowledge, understand different needs, manage expectations, avoid complexity, provide feedback, address ethical issues – i.e. IP, GDPR, consider sharing course of research, give the opportunity for SH to plan own engagement.

Reasons & opportunity for SHE: raise awareness, help with achieving objectives, risk management, share best practice, reduce conflict with transparency, access to resources and information, help to understand where different gaps are.

Consider the background & context of SHE before starting.

Identifying SH: identify, assess and engage; ask yourself who is responsible for decision making, who is being affected, who is interested, who has received previous engagement, who is crucial to deliver long term results, who are the most interested/relevant for your work. In defining the SH roles and contributions, it's also important **when:** before, **i**f they are relevant during the developing strategy (to define concept and, identify outcomes); during in helping establishing agreements, for resources provision, to define project planning, for training and capacity building, to help share knowledge, for the scenario development, to co-design conflict resolution and review success measurement; after to define and develop how you want to implement, publicize and promote the results. It is fundamental to **plan the engagement early on.**

Methods for SHE: opening up, exploring, deciding upon the prioritization of key interests. A detailed planning of the program is the key: targeted activities, do not underestimate the cost and time for SHE, gather early feedback, maintain SH interest, focus on influential SH.

Practicalities, Feasibility, Implementation: consider time, and have a plan B.

Manage SH conflicts: open, hidden, latent, well defined, fuzzy or ill defined. Consider different types of SH conflicts as they can be cognitive, from different interests, normative, relationships, needs, processes or structural issues.

Benefits of monitoring and evaluating the conflicts: better planning of SHE, focus on the objectives, measure success and how to do bring more values and benefits, help informing, changing, improving, demonstrate value of money, show SH their contirbution's impact. Monitor success, process and impact.

Open Source Handbook: https://www.biodiversa.eu/library/#1

1. Matthew Smith underlines that, regarding the inclusivity and 'leaving no one behind principle' it can happen that someone feels left behind. To avoid this, it is recommended to conduct a proper stakeholder analysis to know who is participating. Communication staff is crucial even in the scientific community. As well, public/social services can help to look for the right SH to be targeted, and SH can also look for other SH. Matthew suggests, to counteract stakeholder fatigue, to identify and choose the real interested SH: reach them and ask why they're not engaged, identify who is not involved, how to bring their views in, involve and open the debate even if they disagree, highlighting the events that are publicly funded. A few years ago, industries operated in the watersheds, and a few years back they noticed that everything is connected. But should we now always involve everyone? Not necessarily. To be sure not to duplicate, you need a clear structure prepared and a strong communication plane: SH value being engaged, but they fear bad or not worthy engagement. We also need to be aware of the legal framework in which we are operating (data access, intellectual property) since the beginning.

- **Timothy Vanagt**, senior project manager at ORG, presents a relevant example of a co-creative design of large-scale maritime infrastructures in marine environment.

  Co-creative design of large-scale projects. Infrastructures in marine environment: stakeholder involvement and carbon neutrality

  ORG applies co-creation methodologies through different projects:

  - **energy island**, build an artificial island to produce energy but also protect biodiversity. The co-creation process consists of "work benches": clients and SH receive homework, and it's a cycle where everybody co-creates and take ownership eventually.

    A group of small top experts were selected (not retributed) to work in the project, and ambitions and boundary conditions were set together. Then, for the setting of evaluation criteria, the process of joint fact finding started: the scope was to create a safe space where everything is questioned and should be proved, and a common language is used for all experts (i.e. drawings). Then sections were made (everything is asked to experts from different sections, e.g. biologist about biodiversity) and everything gets quantified and shapes are explored (of the island, of the floors etc.). Afterwards, construction methods are explored with clear and transparent zoom-ins. Then a continuous monitoring and evaluating process are set. https://orgpermod.com/systems/projects/maritime-systems

  - **coastal vision**, with 20 experts. Following same methodologies >100 stakeholders. https://orgpermod.com/systems/projects/kustvisie

  - **North-C-neutral**, need for AI support to calculate complex trad offs. AI can help with marine spatial plan and at the project level.

  - **SOLV**, co-creation process was done before start with the process, all the stakeholders were interviewed; tool to de-risk were used before and during co-creation.

Additionally ORG believes that SHenG does not always have to start and be embedded in 'the field' – it can be various levels of SH that make a project successful, also 'only' political and implementation levels. Subjectivity perception can be tackled by proving as much as possible scientifically.

- **Marisa Fernandez**, coordinator of the department 'control/management of marine environment and resources' at the CETMAR, focuses on the engagement of stakeholders in activities related to the prevention and mitigation of marine pollution.

  Marine pollution prevention and mitigation, focus on stakeholder engagement.

  Marisa is an expert in marine pollution, oil and chemical spills and marine litter prevention and removal projects.

Many international, European and regional conventions and legislations set to reduce and prevent marine pollution have been implemented, as well as many Interreg, EU and national funding programs to support the fight against marine pollution.

Since 2009, many projects have started on oil and chemical spills: they tackle different aspects and issues but share the common goal of improving preparedness and response capabilities against oil and chemical spills. As well, for marine litter projects have started since 2007: the shared goal has been to improve capabilities to prevent, monitor and reduce marine litter. There's a need to produce tools, guidelines, and trainings, and to engage SH.

For SHE: the approach is guided by the knowledge of the context, by common sense and pre-existing relationships. It is better if you already have a methodology and tools to replicate, monitor, and transfer.

Key stakeholders & role: different key SH were involved: competent authorities, organizations in charge of monitoring and responding against pollution, regional sea conventions, EU agencies, International Maritime Organization, productive sectors (e.g. fisheries), social actors (e.g. NGOs), representatives of the civil society.

How to involve them: the role in the project (full partners or associated partners, advisory board, invited expert or collaborator) and by specific project communication and transfer actions; when they were involved (from the beginning of the project or during); by asking them for advice, support for dissemination and involvement on training.

Some challenges: initial untrust from governmental agencies, operational agencies, private sector; language issues; difficult to get the involvement of EU and regional organization, keep the interest and engagement and some SH disappointment and fatigue.

Successful stories: Coastguards-Z operational versus academic approaches, engagement of OSPAR, fisherman during marine litter projects, teachers and scholars.

Final remarks:

tackling marine pollution requires the involvements of a wide typology of SH with different roles: it is key to build trust and use appropriate language. Inclusion and the 'let no one behind principle' is tackled depending on the consultation processes, the identification and mapping process is key! To counteract on stakeholder fatigue, Marisa suggests to take into account the dimension of the process dealt with, do not be too ambitious in the scale. The subjectivity perception can be tackled by communicating and discussing on everything.

13.20 – PART B, stakeholder engagement in R&I regional policy: Entrepreneurial Discovery Process – Smart Specialization Strategies

- Justine Brossard, CRPM, introduction

This session notably presents relevant best practices of the engagement of quadruple helix stakeholders in the elaboration and implementation of their regional smart specialization strategies. It provides a reflection on how to boost stakeholder engagement and co-creation in the entrepreneurial discovery process in the context of the S3, through a presentation of the Open Discovery Process.

The entrepreneurial discovery process in the framework of the S3, is a good example of engagement of stakeholders around the topic of innovation. This session offers concrete examples from regional authorities, one of the key actors of the Mission Ocean, and multistakeholder co-creation models for the elaboration of R&I policies, in addition to the stakeholder engagement processes in research and environmental projects presented during the first session.

- **Francesco Molica**, Economic and Policy Analyst, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission. Presentation of the reflection around the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process.

  Presentation of the concept/theoretical approach: From EDP to ODP?
  From an economic perspective, there are two important elements: first information gaps in innovation and industrial policies and secondly address coordination failures and encourage knowledge spill-overs across the private sector (stimulating more cooperation across private sector). These elements stand from research studies.

  What worked in EDP: the strengthened involvement of stakeholders in both innovation policies and regional/national funding strategies (ESIF), make innovation policies more evidence based, positive effects in terms of policy learning and prioritization and improving communication and coordination amongst a broader array of actors – all were a success.

  What worked less well in EDP: the quality of the process is in the end very different according to policy capacities, institutions, local cultures and historical experiences with innovation policies, scant participation of civil society and small enterprises, less participation of some actors, lack of skills and resources sometimes prevented actors from meaningful contribution, issues in vertical and horizontal coordination and EDP led in some instance to too many priorities.

  Weak/missing dimensions in the EDP: what is missing is the holistic approach to R&I funding, directionality innovation towards addressing long-term societal challenges, continuity of the process to address uncertainty and adjust to emerging needs/information.

  From EDP to ODP/EDP+/XYZ: what about the <u>role of public powers</u>: from main actors driving the strategy knowledge brokers and facilitators, <u>priority setting</u>: shift from sectorial/vertical approach to directions of transformative change and challenge-drive approach, <u>mechanisms</u>: need to experiment with formats to deliver deliberative collaboration. As key features of the ODP you may also apply: control vs influence; directionalities; working backwords from goals; openness: goals, agendas and boundaries. It is also important to manage expectations.

- **Francisco Pinto**, Senior Public Officer, Azores S3 Support Unit, Regional Directorate of Science and Technology, presents the case of the Azores.

  Partnerships for Regional Innovation – Feedback Azores region, as co-leader of the Working Group on the Open Discovery Process and local missions (CHOIRs)

  The **region of Azores** is the co-leader of the Partnership for Regional Innovation Working Group 2 on the Open Discovery Process and local missions (CHOIRS). The results from this working group

are presented as well as relevant methods used by the region to foster the engagement of quadruple helix stakeholders around the topic of research and innovation in the blue economy and marine conservation issues.

!Open Discovery Process and Local Missions

The Partnerships for Regional Innovation (PRI) are a new complementary approach to place-based innovation policy. They are a response to the urgent call of the European Green Deal to address challenges posed by climate change in ways that strengthen social and territorial cohesion and ensure that Europe thrives in the green and digital economy of the future.
The process aims to test tools to enhance the coordination and directionality of regional, national and EU innovation policies to implement Europe's green and digital transitions and to tackle the innovation divide in the EU, they are:

- Firmly anchored in the EU policy framework, supporting the implementation of the European Green Deal, Horizon Europe, Cohesion policy and NextGenerationEU.
- The seek to accelerate transformative outcomes by introducing local missions to coordinate actions under a single directional logic, exploring broad-ranging policy mixes for system-level innovation.
- Strongly focused on innovation policy, but also covers and inspires industrial, employment, education, and social policies.
- They imply new ways of working across government departments focused on addressing territorial challenges.
- They emphasise on actions with strong transformative potential for innovation strategies.
- They focus on broad stakeholder engagement, multi-level governance, synergies between policies and between funds, social dimension of innovation, innovation for SMEs, and innovation directions that co-benefit economy, society, and environment.

The key objective of the PRI is to strengthen the interconnection of regional and local innovation ecosystems and to reinforce European sustainable value chains and deep-tech sectors.

PRI builds on S3 dynamics, but shifts focus from only R&D and innovation capacities to a wider societal context, thus, involving all the parts of the quintuple helix (university-industry-government-society-environment). PRI additionally seeks to adopt a broad and systemic framing of innovation, recognizing that the levers for transformative change lie not just in science and technology but also in the very design of our production and consumption systems.
While S3 focuses on mobilizing only cohesion policy funding, PRI favors the integration of cohesion funding with other funding sources, including RRPs, Horizon Europe and/or national or regional funding linked to territorial goals. PRI also transitions from the EDP (Entrepreneurial discovery process) to the ODP (Open Discovery Process), involving a broader spectrum of stakeholders from different environments and levels, to make a real and sustainable impact on specific needs of countries, regions and citizens. The PRI Pilot Action was launched by the European Commission and the European Committee of the Regions on May 2022. It has the participation of 4 member states, 63 regions, 7 cities and 6 networks. In total, 23 Member States and 74 European Territories are represented.

Activities are tailored to the interests of each participant, and include:

- Thematic workshops;
- Exchanges of good practices;
- In-depth policy reviews with the involvement of external experts;
- Tailored analytical insights and support from JRC staff (e.g. resilience dashboards, complexity analysis).

The main reference document is the "PRI Playbook", developed by the JRC-European Commission with the support of a Scientific Committee of experts.

ODP key features:

- Openness: goals, agendas, boundaries;
- Directionalities: focus on long term societal wellbeing;
- Working backwards from goals;
- Distinction between control and influence.

It includes the ways the EDP process has been implemented in S3 with the addition of new challenge-oriented partnerships with variable sets of stakeholders, according to the goal.

A core objective of the ODP is the establishment of **CHallenge-Oriented Innovation paRtnerships (CHOIRs).**

- Multi-stakeholder and multi-level (government) partnerships.
- Linked to concrete territorial challenges.
- Challenge-oriented or mission-oriented.
- Emphasis on agreement, co-creation and co-ownership.

Challenges defined in terms of collectively determined and broadly understood goals.
Combination of shared understanding of goals and autonomy about their implementation allow broad stakeholder coalitions to explore multiple pathways, maximizing the chances to achieve the goal.

CHOIRs Key elements:

(1) Goals: Agreeing on common goals is a key first step. To ensure alignment with European goals, Territorial goals will have to be seen through the lens of the twin green and digital transition;
(2) Partners: Partly a function of the goal and vice versa. The relevant parts of public and private stakeholders will vary according to the goal;
(3) Partnership teams: Executive bodies consisting of stakeholders who engage with representatives of different sets of stakeholders, according to the goal, working under a whole-of-society approach;
(4) Open agendas: Partnership teams co-develop a collective open and dynamically adjusted agenda describing their proposed path for achieving the goal. Stakeholders open their individual agendas in relation to the goal, permitting synergies in the policy mix and sequencing of actions;

(5) Partnership hubs: Composed solely of public officials from various parts of government. Hubs provide the interfaces with the parts of government that can help accomplish the goals.

Examples in **4 mission actions**:

- NAUTILOS Project (httos://www.nautilos-h2020.eu/);
- SBEP: Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership (http://frct.azores.gov.pt/);
- AMAr: Learning the Sea of the Azores (https://www.oma.pt/index.php);
- MSP4BIO: Integrating Marine Biodiversity Protection and MS (https://mspAbio.eu/).

PRI Pilot action WG2 - Open Discovery Process and local missions (CHOIRs)
Responsibilities of Azores as Co-Leading territory:

- Co-organizing meetings and workshops;
- Internal communication within the WG;
- Communication with the Coordination Team.

The development of a sustainable Blue Economy is critical and a "must" for the Azores.
The relatively small dimension and low population of Azores allows the Regional Government and Local authorities to have a good knowledge of all the relevant regional stakeholders in RD&I The Azores region is already engaged with the S3 Working Group on Sustainable Blue Economy on a first exercise to draft challenges in the sector. The Azores are working on going from ED to ODP, thus, bringing directionality to the process. JRC will launch, in the following months, the PRI Playbook 2.

- Azores will be featured as a case scenario.
- Local missions already being implemented (Sweden and Catalonia) will be part of the best practices showcases.

Examples of stakeholder engagement processes implemented by Azores

- Co-Organization and hosting of the "2023 S3 Summit" (DRCT, ANI, JRC):
  - 1st journey on RIS3 Azores 2022-2027;
  - Innovation and Smart Specialization Forum;
  - PRI learning journey "Co-creating (inter)regional missions";

- RIS3 Azores 2022-2027 Working Groups workshop (over 120 participants in 5 WG):
  - Experiencing ODP in practice;
  - Discussion on possible local challenges and missions;
  - Draft definition of local priority challenges and missions.

Additionally it is explained what is planned for 2024: an open call in the scope of the Azores 2030 (ERDF), with budget of € 500.000 ca. to, over a period of one year, identify the main regional challenges, propose a set of future calls and propose a set of priority local missions (in-line with EU missions). A new series of RIS3 Azores 2022-2027 WG workshops will be organized.
A Peer Review process was selected, within the scope of Interreg Europe, for a dialogue with stakeholders on the S3\PRI and Local-Regional Missions topic.

- **Astrid Burhoi**, represents the region of Vastra Gotaland (Sweden) present best practices from their respective region in the entrepreneurial discovery process, to engage quadruple helix stakeholders from the blue economy sector in a dialogue on research and innovation.

Best practice of stakeholder engagement in the elaboration of regional smart specialization strategies - Entrepreneurial Discovery Process in Vastra Gotaland

Vastra Gotaland region, is one of the Europe's leading maritime regions with solution focused on innovation and sustainable growth. The first regional strategy was 2008 in dialogue with regional actors and then reviewed in 2015 with the goal to 'go together'. The policy and funding program for Sustainable maritime industries runs from 2016-2020 to help the actors achieve their goals; 7 areas were used for the development. From 2021 the maritime sector is part of Region Vastra Goatland. To build regional and local innovation capacity for a sustainable blue economy, it is required to detect needs and possibilities, engage, and mobilize actors and partnerships and support sustainable innovation and knowledge-based growth. Based on that, an innovative platform (Biable Seas) for a sustainable Blue Economy and reginal financial and strategic involvement is underdevelopment. Another project, on sustainable production of fish using AI and advanced data analysis has the aim to enable the land-based fish production.
For **citizens engagement** (5-13 August 2023) the team tried to use data collected during citizens involvement, and to know them part of the process, more involved and aware.

Concluding remarks: It is clear that the long time perspective is important; more synergies in the maritime area are needed; increased visibility of the sea as a natural resource and ecological system; better collaborative between established industry and start-ups; more regional investments for a living coastal area.

- **Nicolas Dourlens**, representing the region of Occitanie, presents best practices from their respective region in the entrepreneurial discovery process, to engage quadruple helix stakeholders from the blue economy sector in a dialogue on research and innovation.

Best practice of stakeholder engagement in the elaboration of regional smart specialization strategies - Entrepreneurial Discovery Process in Occitanie region

La Région Occitanie Pyrénées – Méditerranée: this region has 220 km of coasts, with the following threats: erosion of the sideline, marine submersion, marine pollution, aging infrastructures, demographic and urban pressure, economic activities to strengthen and develop. A challenge is to be able to reformulate the littoral and maritime territory, to give it a new dimension.

The **role of the region** in innovative process is being a facilitator between research, public policy and business and rely on the regional strategic priorities to create a leverage effect.
In 2022, a study measure economic dynamics of region helping with the identification of several activities composing the Blue Economy and helping the regional economical level to find new financial solutions and be a significant leverage and encourage innovation and propose new solutions recognizing Occitaine as a strategic leader.

The tools the region has used are:

- For the Strategic level

    o Smart Specialisation Strategy:
    o Regional scheme for economic development, innovation and internationalization

- For the Civil society

    o Parliament of the Sea: to bring the strategy into line with civil society stakeholders and their needs

- For the businesses

    o Avenir littoral call to attract companies with innovation projects in several themes (2 or 3 themes by edition of the call)
    o Sectors contracts: fishing, boating, aquaculture

The Smart Specialization Strategy was elaborated in 2020 for 7 years (2021-2027) part of regional Green Pact for a sustainable economy and covered 5 topics:

- Floating offshore wind
- Smart & Green boats
- Smart & green Harbours
- Coastal ecological engineering
- Bioresources and blue biotechnologies

Regular working groups with all willing stakeholders on the 5 topics were conducted, with priorities based on expressed needs.

More clarifications: Parliament of the sea, an original structure: unites and represents the maritime community, bringing forward projects and new ideas, innovations, best practices, organize dialogue, debate and mutual understanding. Also carries out national and European lobbying. It has three decision levels: a forum (1573 members), an assembly made up of 4 colleges (212 members) and an executive office (20 members).

Covering 5 cross-cutting themes:

- Identity/culture/heritage
- Ecological transition (biodiversity, renewable energy, etc.)
- Blue economy/attractiveness of professions
- Coastal planning/landscape
- Coastal appeal/International relations.

Parliament's Blue Economy Working Group: the main aim is to help Occitanie Region to build and develop blue economy strategy. The first action was done in 2019 with the creation of study specifications about Blue Economy, sharing progress and results. The study was updated in 2022 and a public feedback event will be held in March 2023.

The aim of Blue Occitanie Economy Community is to help Blue Economy actors to scale-up. The regional economic development agency Ad'occ and the Pole mer mediterranée Cluster are supporting the Region in this process:

- Avenir littoral call: defining and sharing annual themes, stakeholder network, project follow up, catalogue.

- Blue Occitanie economy community: webinars dedicated to Blue Economy actors, shared presence at trade fairs.

The regions intend to manage the funds (eg for AI) and then the industry can manage the process. Innovation in the regions is conducted through meetings all SH, and with key stakeholder (as universities) organize scheduled meeting. In some regions like the Atlantic most SH are very well know so it is more practical. Networking with different regions and external actors can take time, at the beginning they need some coordination but now they are working in Vasta Gotaland.