

## Unleashing Youth Power in Transnational Innovation or a Thriving Blue Economy

Project Number: BSB00580

### About The Project

Welcome to the SEAQUEST Project Newsletter! We are excited to share the latest developments and progress from the SEAQUEST project, a transnational initiative aimed at enhancing research and innovation capacities in the blue economy sector across the Black Sea Basin. This project, funded under the Interreg VI-B NEXT Black Sea Basin Programme, is addressing regional challenges to foster sustainable growth and job creation through innovation and collaboration.

#### SEAQUEST Objectives:

- Strengthen research and innovation capacities in the blue economy sector.
- Foster youth engagement and entrepreneurship through capacity-building initiatives.
- Promote sustainable practices and advanced technology adoption.
- Enhance transnational collaboration to address common challenges in the Black Sea Basin.

#### Target Group:

- Young people: Empowering them with skills and opportunities in the blue economy.
- Local and regional public authorities: Supporting them with strategies and tools for sustainable development.
- NGOs: Facilitating knowledge-sharing platforms for environmental conservation.
- SMEs: Encouraging technological adoption and sustainable practices to boost competitiveness.

### Meet the Partners

The SEAQUEST consortium brings together expertise and regional insights from four distinguished organizations:

- Social Innovation and Cohesion Institute (FIFTY-FIFTY) (Greece): As the lead partner, FIFTY-FIFTY drives the project's vision and coordination. With extensive experience in fostering innovation and community development, the institute ensures that SEAQUEST's initiatives align with regional priorities and transnational objectives.
- PYLON ONE (Greece): Specializing in stakeholder engagement and capacity building, PYLON ONE contributes its expertise in connecting communities and fostering partnerships. Their role is critical in ensuring that the project's activities are inclusive and impactful.
- Burgas Free University (BFU) (Bulgaria): A leading academic institution with a focus on research and education, BFU brings robust analytical and research capabilities to the project. Their involvement ensures that SEAQUEST's interventions are backed by evidence and cutting-edge knowledge.
- Zonguldak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZTSO) (Turkey): Representing the business community, ZTSO facilitates collaboration with industry stakeholders and ensures that the project addresses the needs of SMEs in the blue economy. Their regional expertise adds significant value to the project's goals.

Together, these partners form a dynamic team committed to achieving SEAQUEST's objectives through collaboration, innovation, and sustainability.

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### Spotlight on Activities

Over the past months, the SEAQUEST team has made significant strides in implementing three foundational activities:

#### Activity 1.1: Baseline Assessment and Stakeholder Mapping

This activity focused on gathering crucial insights into the current state of the blue economy sector in the Black Sea Basin. By identifying key stakeholders, such as local authorities, NGOs, SMEs, and academic institutions, SEAQUEST has established a comprehensive map of actors involved in or benefiting from the blue economy. This mapping exercise is a cornerstone for fostering future collaboration and ensuring that the project's interventions are inclusive and impactful.

#### Key outcomes:

Identification of stakeholders across the region.

Creation of a dynamic stakeholder network platform to promote communication and collaboration.

#### Activity 1.2: Youth Needs Assessment and Regional Gap Analysis

Recognizing the pivotal role of youth in driving innovation, SEAQUEST conducted an in-depth assessment of young people's needs and the existing gaps in the blue economy sector. This assessment highlighted the areas where capacity building and skills development are most required to enable youth to contribute meaningfully to the sector's growth.

#### Highlights:

Surveys and focus groups with young individuals from the region.

Identification of critical gaps in technological skills, entrepreneurial knowledge, and access to mentorship.

#### Activity 1.3: Review of Existing Frameworks in the Black Sea Basin

SEAQUEST has reviewed existing policies, regulations, and frameworks related to the blue economy. This activity aimed to identify areas of alignment with the European Green Deal and the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea, ensuring that SEAQUEST's activities complement ongoing efforts and address policy gaps effectively.

#### Key findings:

Limited integration of advanced technologies in policy frameworks.

Need for enhanced regional collaboration to streamline sustainable blue economy practices.

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### Why These Activities Matter

The blue economy holds immense potential for economic growth and job creation, but its sustainability depends on informed policies, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and the active participation of youth. Through these activities, SEAQUEST is laying the groundwork for transformative change in the Black Sea region by:

- Building a robust foundation of knowledge and partnerships.
- Equipping youth with the tools and opportunities to lead innovation.
- Ensuring that policies reflect the region's needs and sustainability goals.

### What's Next?

The insights gained from these activities will guide the next phases of SEAQUEST, including capacity-building programs, pilot projects, and the establishment of transnational collaboration platforms. Stay tuned for updates as we continue to work towards a thriving and sustainable blue economy in the Black Sea Basin.

For more information, visit our website <https://seaquest-project.eu/>.

**Join us in shaping the future of the blue economy!**

[www.seaquest-project.eu](http://www.seaquest-project.eu)



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