



# Restoring our Ocean and Waters by 2030

The power of the young generations' visionary solutions

3-4 October 2023

Liceo Scientifico statale “Vittorio Veneto”, Via De Vincenti, 7 - Milano

The event is organised on the 25th anniversary of the founding of the University of Milan Bicocca together with the Vittorio Veneto Liceo Scientifico - also in cooperation with the European Commission.

The ocean, seas and rivers are increasingly an engine for the European economy, with enormous innovative potential, recognized by the Blue Economy strategy to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors. According to the European Union, the ‘sea’ provides 4,5 million direct jobs. If the global Blue Economy were compared to a national economy, it would be the seventh largest in the world, and the ocean as an economic entity would be a member of the G7. It operates in the planet’s vastest ecosystem: seas and the ocean cover more than 70% of Earth’s surface, they hold 97 % of all our water and sustain 80 % of all forms of life.

The importance of the ocean and our seas is also recognized by the United Nations, which organized the World Conference on Oceans in Lisbon in 2022 and recently concluded successfully the so-called *High Seas Treaty* negotiations aimed at protecting vast areas of our planet's oceans.

And yet in our daily lives, we are leaving an ever-increasing footprint on the ocean and waters which is rapidly degrading their health and threatening their ability to provide many essential services.

This makes us all responsible, individually and collectively, for their protection, regeneration and health. Our young people are able to find visionary solutions to accelerate the transition to zero pollution in the Mediterranean Sea, or to identify ways how best to protect and regenerate our rivers, lakes and our mare nostrum.

***This event aims at promoting a dialogue and debate with our future ocean and water stewards and leaders around new scientific advances, innovation activities and solutions in support of implementing the European [Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030](#). It will showcase how the different related Mission Lighthouses offer many new and inspiring blue jobs and professional opportunities.***

The Blue Economy covers all sectors related to the ocean, seas and coasts, and is a large and rapidly changing segment of the economy, which has taken significant steps to modernise and diversify over the last decade.

In addition to traditional sectors, new economic niches are evolving and growing such as regeneration of lost biodiversity, reduction of pollution, ocean renewable energy, blue bioeconomy and biotechnology, sustainable eco-tourism, environmental certification, management of marine protected areas, STEM education, etc.

The demand for new skills and competences to well execute these new blue jobs and related job profiles will be huge; it will open many future job avenues and opportunities for our future generation. Finally, yet importantly, a fit for purpose trained workforce will constitute an important asset for supporting the implementation of the European Mission *Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030*.

The programme is fully in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it contributes to the UN Decade of Ocean Science and the European Year of Skills 2023.

# Programme

3 October 2023 (14:00 – 18:00)

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## **Intergenerational Dialogue Inspired by the European Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030**

The purpose of this part of the event, an-intergenerational dialogue is to exchange knowledge and expertise about ongoing EU and nationally funded Mission relevant projects and initiatives, and stimulate new ideas and solutions on specific topics that will be addressed in the different classrooms around four thematic challenges. These challenges are intrinsically linked with the objectives of the European Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030, and its related Mission Lighthouses.

Under the guidance of experienced scientists and representatives from the private sector, students and early career researchers will work together the entire afternoon. The results of this joint work will be brought to the attention of the plenary the following day, as inspiration for the students; their teaching staff and all participants, but also as a contribution to the different ongoing activities supporting the implementation of the Mission and its related Mission Lighthouses.

**14:00 – 14:10 Welcome and introduction:** Sigi Gruber, retired European Commission Official and Paolo Galli, Director of Marine Sciences, Technology and Management-MaRHE Center Maldives, University of Bicocca

**14:10 – 14:15 Setting the scene: Why an EU Mission on Restoring our Ocean and Waters by 2030? Claudia Pecoraro,** Policy Officer European Commission

**14:15 – 14:45: Blue skills and blue careers, why are they so important? Cristina Pedicchio,** President of the mare cluster of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region; **Garry Kett,** CIIMAR (PT), the Erasmus funded MATES project (tbc); **Philip Ackermann,** DRL, (DE) The Plastic Pirates Initiative, **Elena Valsecchi,** CONCEPTU Maris “CONservation of CEtaceans and Pelagic sea TURtles in Med: Managing Actions for their Recovery In Sustainability” Life Project EU

**14:45 – 18:00 - Breakout into the four different thematic sessions, called ‘classrooms’:**

### **Classrom 1: The role and management of marine protected areas**

Coordinated by **Paolo Galli**, Director of Marine Sciences, Technology and Management-MaRHE Center Maldives, University of Bicocca

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

**Kora Dvorski** BLUE4ALL, by the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, (BE)

**Cristina Canella** PhD Candidate Marine Sciences, Technology and Management, University of Milano-Bicocca, connecting from the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs, United Nations Secretariat (New York, United States)

**Federica Siena** PhD Candidate Marine Science and Technology, University of Milano Bicocca

### **Classrom 2: Marine Biodiversity**

Coordinated by Jose Luiz Moutinho, coordinator of the EU funded **BlueMissionAtlanticArctic** Coordination&Support Action, AIR centre (PT)

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

**Ocean citizens** by Marc Garcia-Durant Huet; Tenerife (ES)

**CLIMAREST** by Ida Beathe Overjordet, SINTEF OCEAN, (NO)

**Enrico Montalbetti**, Researcher University of Milano Bicocca

**Jacopo Gobbato**, PhD Candidate Marine Science and Technology, University of Milano Bicocca

**Eleonora Concari**, Master Student in Marine Sciences, University of Milano Bicocca and University of Maldives

### **Classrom 3: Inland waters**

Coordinated by **Barbara Leoni**, Professor of inland water University of Milano Bicocca

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

**DANUBE4all** by Helmut Habersack, BOKU University of Vienna, (AT)

**Flavia Dory**, Researcher of inland water University of Milano Bicocca  
Representative from Legambiente

### **Classroom 4: Plastic pollution**

Coordinated by Fedra Francocci,

Project Manager of EU funded **BlueMissionMED**

Coordination&Support Action National Research Council, (IT)

With pitches from ongoing projects and initiatives:

**REMEDIES** by Vesna Kuralt (SI)

**Giuseppe Riva**, Federchimica-PlasticsEurope Italia

**Francesco Saliu**, Researcher on Environmental Chemistry, University of Milano Bicocca

**Becchi Alessandro** PhD Candidate Marine Science and Technology, University of Milano Bicocca

## **4th October 2023 (9:00 – 13:15)**

**9:00 - 9:30** Aula Magna, Liceo Scientifico Vittorio Veneto  
Registration of participants

**9:30 -10:10**

Opening and institutional greetings:

**Mariarosaria Arena**, High school principal Liceo Scientifico Vittorio Veneto

**Giovanna Iannantuoni**, Rector University of Milano-Bicocca

**Anna Scavuzzo**, Deputy Mayor Milan Municipality, Councilor for Education

**10.10 – 10:30 Keynote speaker:**

**John Bell**, Director “Healthy Planet” and Deputy Mission Manager, European Commission, DG Research & Innovation

**10:30 – 11:00 Special Guests**

**Pascal Lamy**, Chair of the Mission Board

**Giovanni Soldini**, Sailor by satellite link from Pacific Ocean

**11:00 – 11:15** Coffee break

**11:15 – 12:00**

**Feedback from the Intergenerational workshops of 3rd October jointly presented by students and experienced professionals**

**12:00 – 12:50**

**Panel discussion: Which blue professions for which future?**

moderated by **Elisabetta Balzi**, Head of Unit at European Commission, DG Research and Innovation, Healthy Seas and Ocean:

**Delphine Lobelle**, Fugro Product Owner: Coastal Hazard Analytics (NL)

**Roberto Cimino**, Vice president Cluster BIG - Blue Italian Growth, (IT)

**Raffaele Leone**, Director Focus Magazine (IT)

**Adrian Stanica**, Coordinator of The International Centre for Advanced Studies on River-Sea Systems (RO)

**Silja Teege**, the Blue Generation Project, (ES)

**12.50**

Conclusions

**Simona Tironi**, Councilor for Education, Training, Employment, Lombardy Region

**Giovanna Iannantuoni**, Rector University of Milano-Bicocca