



**10th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy of Baltic Sea Region  
12-13 June 2019  
Gdańsk, Poland**

**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Seminar: Blue Economy Investment Opportunities for Baltic Sea solutions  
Time: 13 June, 10:45-12:15**

**The European Commission (DG MARE) has organised a Seminar on investment opportunities in Baltic Sea Region, in co-operation with ‘Race For The Baltic’ foundation.**

The objective of the seminar was to explore the opportunities for investment in sustainable “blue” ventures, in particular SMEs and start-ups, and highlight the opportunities in the Baltic Sea region through an inspiring cross-sector dialogue.

Speakers discussed the investment gaps and opportunities for blue economy and the available sources of financing, with a particular focus on innovative financial instruments. Concrete examples from the Baltic Sea region linked to circular economy – which was the main theme of the EUSBR Forum this year – have also been demonstrated.

Overall, the Seminar aimed to incentivise and inform relevant Baltic Sea region stakeholders to use the opportunities provided for investment in supporting the development of a sustainable blue economy.

The Seminar was moderated by **Marc Klaus / Race For The Baltic**, a non-profit foundation that aims to restore the health of the fragile Baltic Sea ecosystem. He welcomed participants and introduced the panel which was composed of the following speakers who gave presentations covering a range of blue investment-related topics:

- **Bernhard Friess** / Director at DG Mare,  
“Scene setting / opportunity for Blue Investment”
- **D. Michael Adams** / President, Ocean Assets Institute  
“Facilitation mechanism for SMEs – access to financing platform/match-ups
- **Peter Carlsson** / Symbiosis Developer, Sotenäs Symbiosiscentrum  
“Blue Business Example – Circular Economy approach”
- **Tiina Salonen** / Senior Environmental Analyst, Nordic Investment Bank  
“Baltic Blue Bond – additional focus/finance on Blue Economy – BSR focus



## **Presentations:**

**Bernhard Friess** highlighted how the European Commission is committed to stimulating sustainable blue growth throughout Europe. He provided a number of examples of financing vehicles and concrete projects in the Baltic Sea, for example the ‘Baltic Blue Growth’ project that supports research and the development of mussel farms as a measure to reduce eutrophication that also can be circular.

He also informed about a novel technical assistance mechanism which will be operated by dedicated investment experts to contribute in building a blue "investment and innovation community" – including Baltic Sea region enterprises and organisations – to help SMEs to become investment-ready.

**D. Michael Adams** provided insights into a recently conducted market analysis showcasing a bankable project pipeline whereby innovative ideas could meet investment needs in various blue economy sectors in the EU.

**Peter Carlsson** explained about the successful public-private partnership model that is being implemented in the municipality of Sotenäs in Sweden with concrete socio-economic benefits such as job creation and carbon emission reduction. The main concept behind this successfully implemented initiative at local level is to act as innovative hub in an environment where the human meeting is the basis for the transition to a circular economy while strengthening existing businesses and creating opportunities for new ones.

**Tiina Salonen** introduced a recently launched Baltic Blue Bond initiative from the Nordic Investment Bank which aims to finance projects that help tackle environmental problems facing the Baltic Sea region. Examples were presented such as modernizing a wastewater treatment plant in Turku and financing clean transport solutions in Stockholm. The NIB has long been playing an important role in the protection of the Baltic Sea and investors are conscious of the challenges the Baltic Sea is facing. The blue bond enables them to target investments addressing these issues.

## **Discussion:**

The general response and questions from the audience reflected strong support for the development of public-private partnership initiatives to develop and finance blue economy businesses in the Baltic Sea region – and the need was expressed for more communication about the funding sources and investment platforms, from both the public sector (e.g. municipalities) and the private sector (SMEs)

Finally, further to the moderator’s question on how to engage and attract young people of both genders in finding solutions for the problems facing the Baltic Sea, panellists highlighted areas such as the sharing economy, innovative use of marine resources for blue biotechnology, as well as business opportunities to tackle the issue of marine litter.