



## **Black Sea Stakeholder Conference in Batumi, Friday 15 September 2017**

### *Connecting the region through marine and maritime cooperation*

Dear Madam/Sir,

On behalf of the European Commission, the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection, it is our pleasure to invite you to the **4<sup>th</sup> high-level Black Sea Stakeholder conference** which will take place on **15 September 2017** in **Batumi, Georgia**.

For a fourth year in a row, the conference will offer a forum for institutional and private stakeholders working on maritime affairs in the Black Sea to discuss issues at stake for the blue economy of the region, showcase best practices and map the way ahead. The benefit of cross-sectoral integration will again be at the heart of the panel discussions, exploring how smart cooperation and intelligent infrastructures support growth and increase competitiveness. This year, the conference will also take stock of the implementation of the [Bucharest declaration](#) adopted in October 2016 on sustainable fisheries and discuss concrete actions to improve the sustainability of fishing resources, particularly with regard to scientific advice, sustainable small-scale fisheries, capacity building, and fight against IUU fishing.

On this basis, with your contribution we will try to assess how to maximise marine and maritime cooperation in the Black Sea and translate it into practical advantages for the countries and stakeholders in the area.

The conference will be organised around the following themes:

- *how to support blue growth,*
- *what is the added value of integration,*
- *how to improve marine knowledge and enhance marine environment*
- *how to promote maritime careers,*
- *sources of funding for maritime projects and how to find partners to fulfil them.*

This conference will offer an interactive platform for discussion and debate and will give you ample opportunity for networking with your peers and experts. The working languages will be English, Georgian and Russian, with interpretation facilities available throughout all conference sessions.

To confirm your participation we invite you to register preferably before 1 September 2017 by completing the online registration form which can be found on the conference website ([Fourth Black Sea Stakeholder Conference](#)). The registration code is: "**Attendee**".

For any other information concerning the organisation of the Conference, please contact the event organisers GOPACOM ([BlackSeaBlueEconomy@gopacom.eu](mailto:BlackSeaBlueEconomy@gopacom.eu), T: + 32 2 234 50 61). We would be grateful if you could highlight the conference to your network contacts so that we can reach more possibly interested stakeholders in your countries.

We look forward to meeting you in Batumi.